No.4 JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1989

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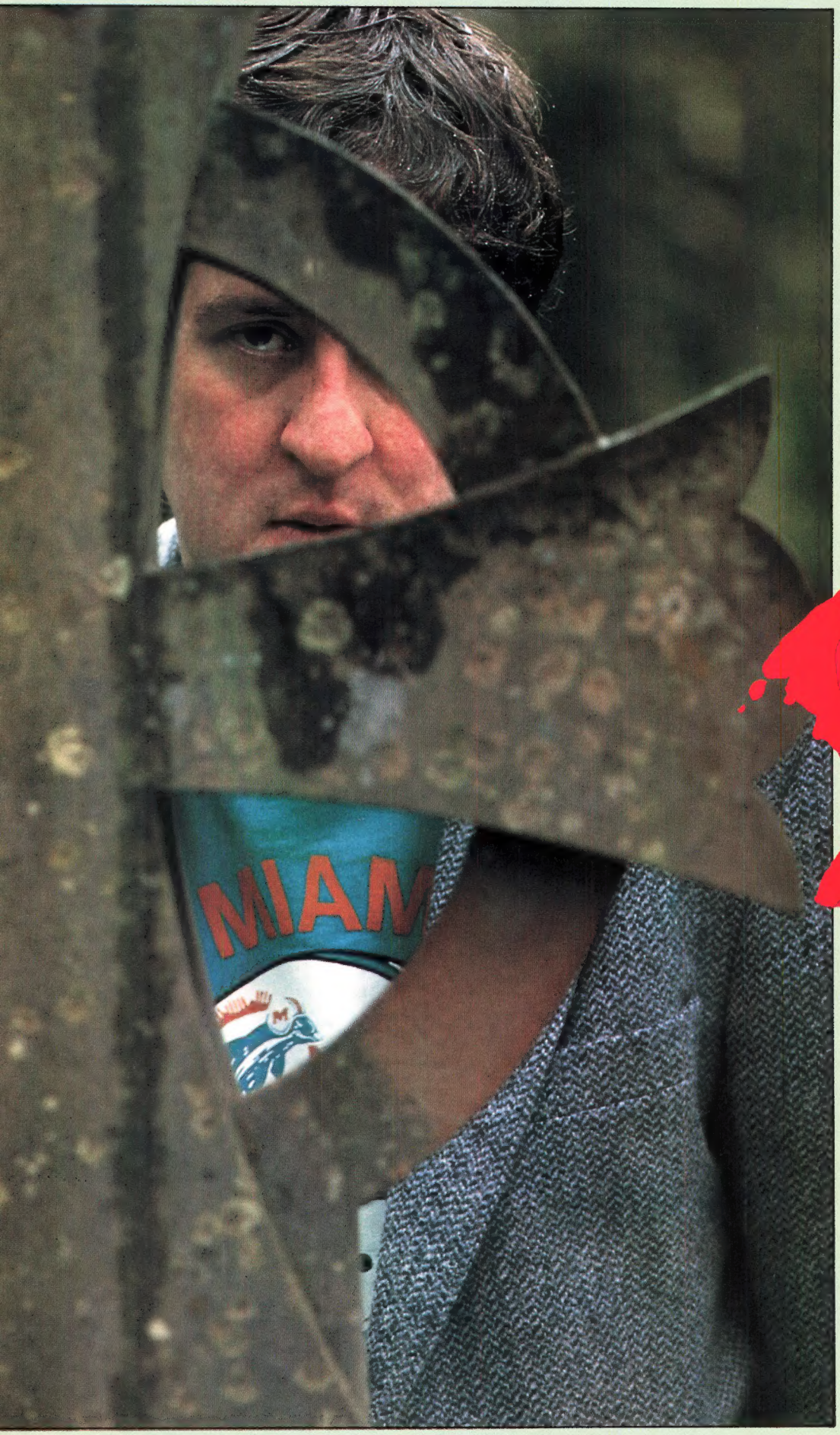


LET'S NOT FORGET THE VISCERA

Publishers and film distributors are forever boasting of the way in which the product they sell challenges the boundaries of acceptability. But are they? It's simple enough to hype novels and films, add to them a sense of the outrageous which is all too often dispelled by the simple act of reading or watching – and by then it's too late to save your pocket.

The 'beyond the limits' effect is, however, what most horror writers would like to achieve in their own, several, ways. A general gameplan of the field shows two camps of author. The first lets it all hang out: monsters, perverse emotions, sex, and – let's not forget – viscera. It's the road of the Splatterpunk as well as writers like (in their own different ways) Shaun Hutson and James Herbert.

Conversely there are those who would rather suggest than show, and use images which engage the deeper seat of the mind rather than playing purely upon the conscious. Living in the literary tents of this camp are Americans like Dennis Etchison, Charles L. Grant, and Karl Edward Wagner, Britons like Ramsey Campbell and Stephen Laws.

In the large drill ground between camps there are writers like Clive Barker and Brian Lumley who manipulate the conscious and subconscious parts of the mind.

Yet on a closer inspection you see that in many cases the masks may be different but the faces are the same. Take, for instance, the subtle writers: supernatural influences combine with often ironic social subtexts, such as the hauntings of spirits or monsters who have been hard done by in life. The stories take place in different locations with widely differing characters, but the central core is the same.

Similarly, the hardcore horror writers combine elements which are synonymous with their types of book: heavy metal music, violence, designer drugs, and surprisingly narrow concepts of sexuality. I have no problem with these tools of the trade which are, after all, part of our society and should be explored. It is, however, the claim that authors have gone beyond what is acceptable, have written something so grotesque or controversial that it constitutes something entirely new that infuriates me.

The current consensus among some publishers desperate to find new authors is that a quickening in pace and gore breaks new ground. True, these works often hit the top positions in the film and book best-seller lists . . . but that means nothing – except that an author's bank account eventually starts to bulge.

Sales are, of course, an important consideration, but all horror and fantasy authors should also add a little extra to the whole body of work every time they sit down and write. Unfortunately that just isn't happening. There are two possible reasons for an overadherence by some writers to the formulae of horror. The first, and most obvious, is that writers are being urged to turn out quickie books to order. They are forced to cut corners and, as a result, in creep the clichés.

The second and more disturbing reason follows on from Clive Barker's recent statement that he's 'in love with the monstrous'. Many writers are in love with the horror genre, so in love, in fact, that they often can't see over its well established walls, fail to (really) break out of the genre prison and so their monsters come from within established tradition – mutated perhaps but all too tediously recognisable. In a similar vein Brian Lumley has said that few writers have witnessed real horror, and that lack in their personality, in their experience, reflects very obviously in their writing.

Maybe it is time that more writers acknowledged the existence of the monstrous outside in more than established horror fantasy terms, reappraised evil and the perverse, and animated monsters the like of which have never been seen before. A difficult job with the wealth of material already available? I think not. The human imagination is never static and, after all, it's a horror author's job to deal with the fantastic not the conservative.

REAL HORROR BEHIND HALLOWE'EN

While we're discussing stereotypes let's take a look back at Hallowe'en and the vociferous outlash against the 'festival' this year.

Newspapers, television and radio suddenly picked up on 'popular' calls to ban Trick or Treating, Children's parties, rubber masks and even the wearing of costumed fakery by young children. A small number of church groups – with little official backing – and some teachers' associations suddenly appeared to believe that even the act of dressing up a child as a witch was a contributory factor toward the development of an (unhealthy?) interest in the occult.

Just before Hallowe'en I appeared on a BBC radio programme which explored the controversy. Fortunately the show was well balanced, the interviewer clued-up on the subject and the gentleman I was supposedly pitted against willing to be involved in a critical argument. There are, however, some groups who are so obssessed with their own righteousness that they cannot see the hypocrisy in what they say. Since they persist in mentioning horror and fantasy in the same holier-than-thou breath as Hallowe'en perhaps it's about time that someone fed them a few truths.

Hallowe'en has nothing to do with good or evil. Once a pagan festival in celebration and remembrance of the dead, wound in – like most pagan rituals – with fertility worship of the Earth Mother Goddess, Hallowe'en is centred around the life principle – no stereotypical witches, demons, and devils.

Like so many successful religions before (and after) it, Christianity absorbed and transmogrified most pagan rituals and holy days including Hallowe'en. To hallow is to make holy, and the Church festival is All Hallows Eve, or All Saints Day. Nevertheless, as with Christmas, the common people continued to observe the underside of the Christian holy day and it was the Church which introduced the popular witchy feeling to the commoners' festival. The old gods became the new demons, and you can see some of the pagan deities within the faces of gargoyles and even the Devil himself.

Who, then, was originally responsible for Hallowe'en which is now, admittedly, a disgustingly commercial venture? Why, the early Christians, and it can be historically proved. Today it's the Americans. If we in Britain are to be concerned about the rise in popularity of Hallowe'en, we should look to the States. Hallowe'en, though never entirely absent, has hardly in recent times enjoyed the recognition it has always had in America . . . until very recently. Images from movies like *Halloween*, even more saintly films such as *E.T.*, have begun having a commercial effect in the UK. It's an opportunity to sell masks, costumes and – who knows before long – fancy cards.

I'm certainly no pagan but the moral majority is about to squirm even further when I say that Christmas – you know, the jolly season we're about to celebrate – was, also a pagan festival. The Christmas tree is a pagan symbol, so are Yuletide logs, as are the baubles and candles; and what earthy spirits are to be found hiding behind pretty symbols like holly, ivy and (kissing under the) misteltoe?

Now, I'm in no way taking a sideways swipe at those people who think that everything is evil unless it fits in with their conception of god – I happen to be fairly moderate in my views when compared to some people in the fantasy genre. Like so many people who can distinguish between fact and fantasy – and who like to get their facts right – I am fed up with people who constantly draw an illogical connection between horror and the occult and who seem to have nothing better to do than make ordinary people, who happen to write about the fantastic, into slavering perverts ready to turn the world toward some devil.

Perhaps now we've been forced to talk the problem out yet again this year, we can take a closer look at the evils that are here and now rather than playing on fears of what may happen – but curiously haven't happened yet in the long life of Hallowe'en – as long as we don't take note of the views of a relatively small sector of the Christian community.

I wish you a happy Christmas . . .

John Gilbert

THE BEST OF 1988

So who was the best in 1988? The award ceremony for the World and British Fantasy Awards was a more or less glittering occasion held at the Ramada Inn West, London, on the last day of the World Fantasy Convention – Sunday October 30. The presentations were made by Master of Ceremonies Clive Barker and prefaced by a speech from Guest of Honour James Herbert. Anyone who saw their TV double-act on Wogan the following Monday evening, will know that they make a formibabble team, even after a three-course meal, and they certainly outshone the speeches of the World and British Fantasy Awards.

Here they are – those awards in full . . .

1988 World Fantasy Awards

Best Novel: *Replay* by **Ken Grimwood** (Arbor House). A worthy winner, though little known in the UK.

Best Novella: *Buffalo Girls Won't You Come Out Tonight?* by **Ursula K. LeGuin** (Capra Press/IASFM). A well-known lady of fantasy and science fiction on both sides of the Atlantic. Another worthy win.

Best Short Story: *Friend's Best Man* by **Jonathan Carroll** (F&SF). We always pick the best, so look out for an interview with this very funny man soon in **FEAR**.

Best Anthology: *The Architecture of Fear* edited by **Kathryn Cramer & Peter Pautz** (Arbor) and *The Dark Descent* edited by **David G. Hartwell** (Tor). A tie for first place, Kathryn Cramer had us in awe at her dress as well as her editorial abilities and we've always backed Tor for finding quality writers and editors both in the States and the UK.

Best Collection: *The Jaguar Hunter* by **Lucius Shepard** (Arkham House). Not an unexpected win and many people came away from the convention with signed copies of the book.

Best Artist: **J.K. Potter**, an American artist who uses photography in a way rarely seen before. He also has the knack of winning this award time after time . . .

Special Award Professional: **David G. Hartwell** (Arbor House/Tor anthologies).

Special Award Non-professional: **Robert & Nancy Garcia** (American Fantasy) and **David B. Silva** (*The Horror Show*). Another tie but deservedly so. *The Horror Show*, in particular, as a US magazine filled with author interviews, gossip and comment had this one coming.

Life Award: **Everett Bleiler.**

British Fantasy Awards

Best Novel: *The Hungry Moon* by **Ramsey Campbell** (Century). We couldn't be prouder of one of the UK's most brilliant horror technicians.

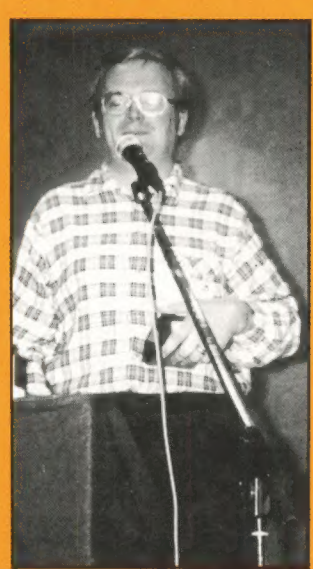
Best Story: *Leaks* by **Steve Rasnic Tem** (Whispers VI). An American writer whose short fiction you'll soon witness in **FEAR**.

Best Small Press: *Dagon* edited by **Carl T. Ford**. The Lovecraft 'zine which swept them all away last year.

Best Film: *Hellraiser* directed by **Clive Barker** (New World). Against some hefty opposition, which included *Angel Heart*, *The Fly* and *Robocop*, the **FEAR** clans again backed the winner.

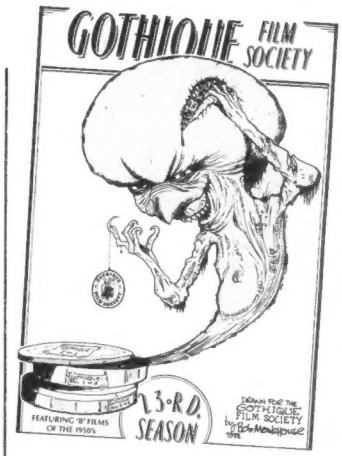
Best Artist: **J.K. Potter**. Well, what can we say?

Most Promising Newcomer – The Icarus Award: **Carl T Ford**. A wise choice by the committee of the British Fantasy Society.



Hungry for the Moon: Ramsey Campbell gets British Best Novel award

GOTHIC SEASON



FILM FANS are in for a treat as the **Gothique Film Society** once again opens its doors for a selection of classic – and not so classic – chillers. On December 30 **William K. Everson**, author and film archivist, presents another show of vintage rarities. On January 27 there's a double bill of designer terror, tastefully chosen by colour when *Horrors of the Black Museum* is followed by *The Black Zoo*.

The Society's 23rd anniversary bash on February 17 is capped by a second double film bill on March 17: colours again in *Blue Sunshine* and powerful potions in *Daughter of Dr Jekyll*. More information can be obtained from Robin James, *75 Burns Avenue, Feltham, Middlesex*, enclosing an SAE.

MORE BASKET CASES

CRITICISM of sequels – and how much has there been? – is unable to dissuade film companies from milking as much money as they can from the senseless repetition of tired ideas.

The continuing story includes *Star Trek V*, which has Brit actor **Ian McKellan** added to the cast, *Never Ending Story II*, to be directed by *George Miller* – not the *Mad Max* man – and *Howling V*, which was announced at the recent film distributors' fair in Milan.

Also on the storyboards are *Lethal Weapon II*, with **Gibson** and **Glover** as the stars and **Richard Donner** in the director's chair, *Jagged Edge II* directed by **Glenn Close**, and *Maniac II* starring **Joe Spinell**.

Frank Hennenlotter has also disclosed that he's planning to make *Basket Case II* and *Frankenhooker* – ye gods help us.

On a slightly happier note **Arnie Schwarzenegger** is to play Sergeant Rock from the Marvel comic series and is likely to be joined by **John Cleese** (?), direction by **John McTiernen** – and it will need some.

CABAL HITS COMPUTER

WE RUN very few computer news stories but we knew you'd want to know that two fantasy/horror games are about to hit the UK market.

Clive Barker's new novel *Cabal* has been bought by UK software house, the Birmigham-based **US Gold**. Plans are well advanced to launch the package in the latter part of next year when the *Cabal* film, *Nightbreed*, is released.

You can also now get a computer adaptation of RCA/Columbia's *Fright Night*, which gives you 12 bloodsucking hours to vampirise everybody in the FN House – oh . . . how original. *Fright Night* is available for the Atari ST and Amiga computers, from **Microdeal**, *Box 68, St Austell, Cornwall PL25 4YB*. Tel: 0726 68020.

MORE NIGHTMARES

OUR STORY about *A Nightmare On Elm Street The Game* – Issue Two – provoked a large response, particularly from those who can't pick it up from a local Virgin store. Ever keen to please the needs of readers we've tracked down the British distributor, TM Games, which can can be reached at *Chart House, Littlehampton, West Sussex*. Happy hunting.

PRINCE OF DARKNESS II

COULD YOU be the person to write a John Carpenter film? That was what **FEAR** asked you in our special competition in

Issue Three. The ideas was to write the sequel to John Carpenter's *Prince of Darkness*, and the resposn has been so staggering that we're extending it for another month.

More than £2,000 of video prizes are up for grabs plus the opportunity to have your script idea scrutinised by the man himself. Details are available from Issue Three of **FEAR** (back numbers available from the usual address) or from all good video rental shops. All entries must be in January 16, the rules given in Issue Three apply, and there will be no further extensions!

RETURN OF THE REAPER

A STUNNING seventh plate for **Dave Carson**'s *Reaper's Image* portfolio – see **FEAR** Issue Two – is about to be launched. The original portfolio of six illustrations, priced at £5.00, is limited to 500 copies and includes images from the works of **Clive Barker**, **Ramsey Campbell**, **James Herbert** and **Stephen King**. Just 250 copies of the new plate, this time illustrating Clive Barker's *Weaveworld*, will soon be available. More information from Grim Reaper Design, *104 Highcliffe Road, Wickford, Essex.*

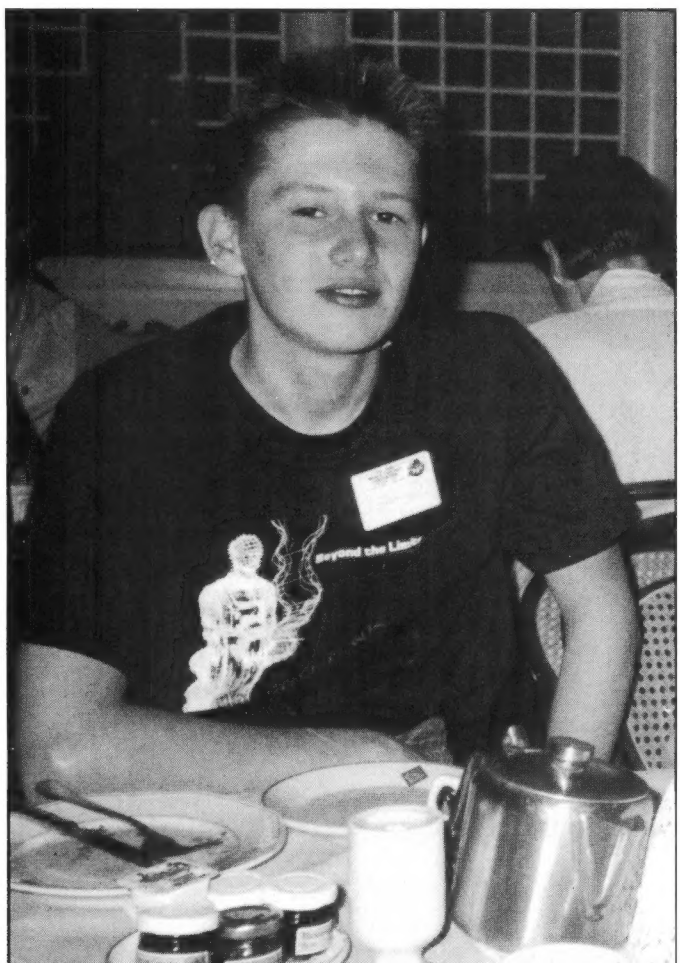
WORLD CON WINNER

Simon Beech from Nottingham, the 17-year-old winner of our World Fantasy Convention competition, met his heroes and heroines during Hallowe'en weekend.

Long chats with the likes of authors Clive Barker and James Herbert were followed by a special late night charity screening of *Hellbound: Hellraiser II*, breakfast with Ramsey Campbell, a host of publishers' parties and a seat on the **FEAR** table at the World and British Fantasy Awards banquet.

Simon is also a budding author and no doubt picked up a few tips from the gathered multitude. It's also likely that you'll find him in future issues of **FEAR** – in a fiction or non-fiction capacity. After it was over a weary Mr Beech said, 'I thoroughly enjoyed myself during my stay. I hope to se you again next year at the British convention.'

And so do we, Simon.



BLACK SUNDAY

NORTHERN HORROR FESTIVALS aims to do for the Manchester's Mayfair Cinema what Shock Around The Clock has done for London's Scala.

On Sunday January 29 hundreds of horror film fans will converge on the cinema, all eager to watch the gore on offer. The programme is likely to include *Nightmare on Elm Street IV*, *Fright Night II*, *Hellbound: Hellraiser II*, *Return of the Living Dead II* , *The Kiss*, *Paperhouse*, *Child's Play*, *Necromancer*, *Lair of the White Worm*, *Rampage*, *Phantasm II*, *Out of the Dark*, *The Blob*, *Friday the 13th Part VII*, *Maniac Cop*, *Howling III*, *Zombie Brigade*, *Opera*, *The Host* and *The Exorcist*. Guests will include **Ramsey Campbell** and **Shaun Hutson**. Sounds like a good party.

More information from **Malcolm Daglish** or **David Bryan** at *70 Thatch Leach Lane, Whitefield, Manchester M25 6EW.*

Black Sunday, venue

3-D HORROR

A quirky Christmas goodie for those of a childlike glee in paper engineering, *Classic Tales of Horror* by **Terry Oakes** presents five pop-up scenes of creepy mayhem. See Frankenstein's monster come alive, marvel at Dracula's climbing agility, enter ghastly Sleepy Hollow, gurgle at the swinging Pendulum in the Pit and scream with shock at the operatic Phantom's grisly face as you pull tabs, swivel lids and open doors. Quite a bite at £6.95, but it must have cost Souvenir Press a fair chunk to produce.

LITTLE BLACK BOXES

THE BBC – Black Box Club – runs, among other things, a fantasy/horror/science fiction magazine on tape which will have you both in hysterics and awe. Each tape is put together with the professionalism of a BBC Radio programme and contains interviews with VIPs such as **Ingrid Pitt**, **Vincent Price** and **Tom Baker**, comic serials, which include *Killer Wardrobe* and not-so-funny stories from Dr Bedlam. The next audio ish is out in January, and the guys and the team responsible are also putting together a video programme, called *Black Box on the Box*. It's all very impressive and more details can be obtained from Black Box Club, *17 Bryntec Ave, Pontllanfraith, Blackwood, Gwent NP2 2BY*.

Mark Phelps talking to Tom Baker for the Black Box Club

FEARFUL WINNERS

Videos, books, and playing cards. All prizes from FEAR competitions in issue three. The prizes are being dragged from the primevil swamp of John Gilbert's front room and winging their way to . . .

KOKO COMPETITION

The book **Peter Straub** co-wrote in 1984 was *The Taislman* and Straub's co-author was **Stephen King**. And the lucky six who win a copy of *Koko* are: D. Billington, Hadfield, Cheshire; Kevin Auty, Ossett, W. Yorksshire; Alex Watson, Little Kingshill, Bucks; J.T. Roberts, Preston Wynne, Hereford; C. Pattison, South Harrow, Middlesex; Dorita Somerville, Tonbridge, Kent.

Twelve runners-up each receive a pack of specially commissioned gold lettered playing cards and they are: Matthew Tappi, Keyworth, Notts; A.T. Mason, Portsmouth, Hants; John Cole, Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham; Richard Steele, Sheffield, S. Yorks; Steven Porter, Craigavon, N. Ireland; J.P. Winder, Clacton-On-Sea, Essex; Simon Clifford, Chippenham, Wilts; P.M. Smita, Sutton-In-Craven, W. Yorkshire; Kevin Batsford, Caerphilly, Mid Glamorgan; Steve Lines, Clane, Wilts; R.J. Hookie, Peterborough; Neil Hussey, Stoke-On-Trent, Staffs.

NIGHTFLYERS COMPETITION

CBS-Fox were giving away six copies of the *Night Flyers* video and the answer to the question was, **Michael Praed** starred in *Robin Of Sherwood*. The six who win a vid for knowing that are: Dave Cook, Brighton, Sussex; P.J. Harris, Beamont Leys, Leicestershire; D. Carter, Wembly, Middlesex; Suzanne Reynolds, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire; CM Bennett, Redditch, Worcestershire; Sarah Wilmot, Cowplain, Hants.

GANG BANG COMPETITION

Those of you that knew **Dennis Lipscombe** played the mayor in *The Heat of the Night* could well be one of the ten winners below who each receive a copy of the Medusa Video *Retribution*: A. Rushton, Charlesworth, Cheshire; Jason P. Woodward, Telford, Shropshire; Marcus Abrahams, Bakewell, Derbyshire; Shephen Robson, Mansfield, Motts; Denise O'Moore, Greystones, Co Wicklow; Trevor Mitchell, Chatham, Kent; A.D. Thomas, Helsby, Cheshire; Jason Dicks, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire; Jon Simcoe, Kettering, Northants; Tony Harrington, Gravesend, Kent.

Winter comes early in the States. The snow quickly hardens and the wind ensures that most right-thinking Americans stay indoors. Not so the film-makers though, as Philip Nutman reports from New York, movieland seems to be skating on some very thin ice

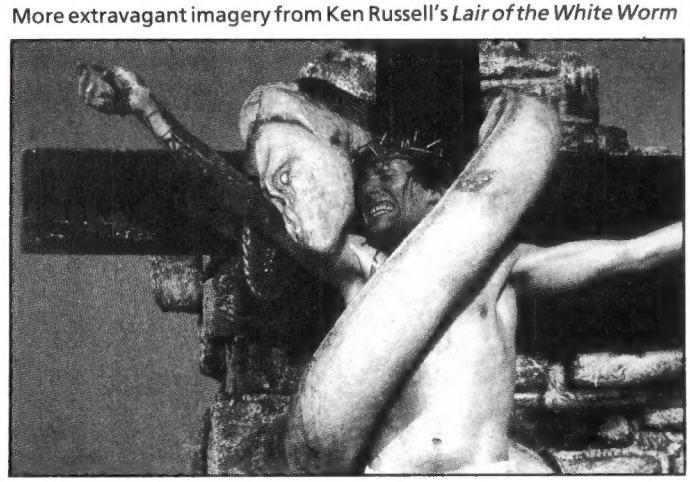
DEARTH OF DEATH

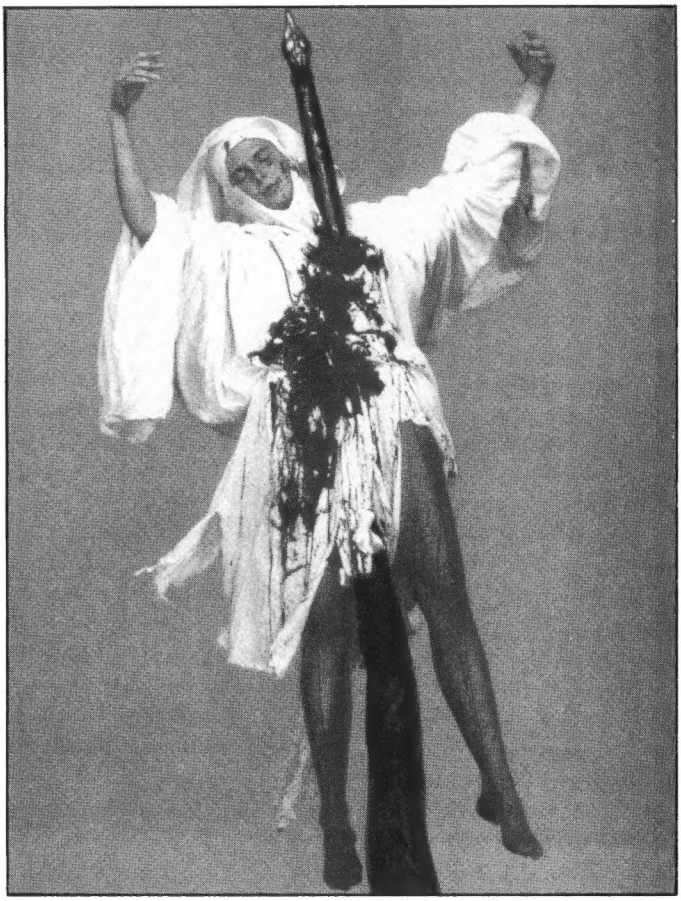
THE FALL glut of horror movies has nearly run its course. This state of affairs won't, however, affect **FEAR** readers since there will be the inevitable transatlantic delay in movies such as *Child's Play*, *The Kiss* and **Ken Russell**'s hilarious *Lair of the White Worm* based on the Bram Stoker novel, reaching our screens. The latter flick was scheduled for a December slot in the UK but Vestron has put it back to next March.

In Hollywood very little in the way of fantasy, horror or science fiction is currently in production, so we now have exclusive news to pass on from the land of the creatively constipated.

Nightmare on Elm Street V is in development and half the horror writers in the States have been commissioned to pen treatments: splatterpunks **John Skipp** and **Craig Spector** and **Dennis Etchison** have all be signed up by New Line to present their ideas. For *Nightmare IV*, the company signed up every film director/screenwriter in tinsel town to do the same. At least this time they are pursuing people who can write.

More extravagant imagery from Ken Russell's *Lair of the White Worm*





FILMS IN PRODUCTION

BATMAN
Guber-Peters/Warner Brothers. Executive Producer: Benjamin Melniker, Michael Uslan; Producers: Peter Guber, Jon Peters, Chris Kenny; Director: Tim Burton; Screenplay: Sam Hamm, Charles McCowan. Starring: Michael Keaton, Jack Nicholson, Kim Basinger, Jerry Hall, Elton John, Billy Dee Williams.

STAR TREK V
Paramount. Producer: Harve Bennett; Director: William Shatner; Screenplay: David Loughery; Starring: William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelly, James Doohan, George Takei, Ian McKellan.

STOP PRESS: THE FORCE RETURNS!

FEAR can exclusively reveal that *Star Wars IV* is **back on the boil!** No firm news yet as to casting, but the storyline is expected to be a prequel, telling the story of Anakin Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi during the Clone Wars. More news in the spring of 1989.

FREDDY – TV STAR

WHILE on the subject of the ubiquitous Mr Krueger, *Freddy's Nightmares*, the spin-off television series, debuted on networks across the US in mid-October. The hour-long pilot episode, directed by **Tobe Hooper** (*Texas Chainsaw Massacre, Poltergeist* et al), turned out to be a serious disappointment. Detailing the background story to Freddy's burning at the hands of the Elm Street parents, the script – the handiwork of no less than three writers – was one of the worst pieces of television fodder I've ever seen. Uniformly bad acting and pedestrian direction by Hooper made it the perfect cure for insomnia.

On a more positive note concerning television anthologies, I have been hearing good things about *Monsters*, the new show from Laurel Entertainment, which is the replacement for *Tales from the Darkside* – which can be found on the Channel 5 video label – but, at press time, I haven't seen any episodes so I cannot comment further.

IT'S A ZOMBIE'S LIFE

ZOMBIE MOVIES may seem to be on the way back into favour now that *Nightlife* has just wrapped production. It's about your average 17-year-old, called Archie, who's forced to work in his uncle's mortuary dressing bodies while the other kids party.

As if life wasn't deadbeat enough he's tormented by a gang of teenagers whose idea of a joke is to nick a body and force Archie to follow a trail of embalming fluid to its hiding place. The story also includes a gorgeous cheerleader, called Joanie, who's just out of Archie's life, and Charly, a pretty young thing who likes cars more than boys.

Eventually, the gang is killed in a collision with a chemical-carrying truck. But they won't lay down and come after Archie with diabolical vengeance in their mouldering eyes. Archie and Charly are on the defensive and only their wits will keep them alive.

At press time the movie was passing through post-production and should be released in the States sometime in early 1989. Look out for it theatrically or on video toward Christmas – that's *next* year.

AUDIO HORROR

IT'S PLEASING to note that the quality of books on audio cassette has increased considerably during the past few years and that the selection of horror and fantasy titles available is becoming surprisingly current.

Simon and Schuster **Audioworks** offers an interesting selection of excellent adaptations. Its most recent release is a two-tape set of three stories from **Douglas E. Winter**'s *Prime Evil* anthology, read by **Ed Begley Jr.**, with Winter doing the Rod Sterling-style introductions. The set, entitled *A Taste of Blood*, features **Stephen King**'s *The Night Flyer*, **Paul Hazel**'s *Having a Woman at Lunch*, and **Thomas Tessier**'s *Grotesque Food*. The running time is 150 minutes and the price is £14.95.

Other titles include **Peter Straub**'s *Koko* read by **James Woods**, **Dean R. Koontz**'s *Lightning*, **Stephen King**'s *The Mist* (adapted by Dennis Etchison), fully dramatised in 3-D sound. **Clive Barker**'s *The Body Politic* and *The Inhuman Condition* are both fully dramatised (the former in 3-D) and *The Hellbound Heart* is read by Barker himself.

Prices range from £9.95 to £14.95. The Barker books can be only be obtained through specialist fantasy shops in the UK but will soon be more readily available in the highstreet stores. More information about the range can be obtained from Simon and Schuster, Simon and Schuster Building, *Rockerfeller Centre, 1230 Avenue of The Americas, New York 10020, USA.*

HELLBOUND – TO CUT OR NOT TO CUT

US CENSORS have done their work on *Hellbound: Hellraiser II*, leaving few of people on either side of the filmic divide happy.

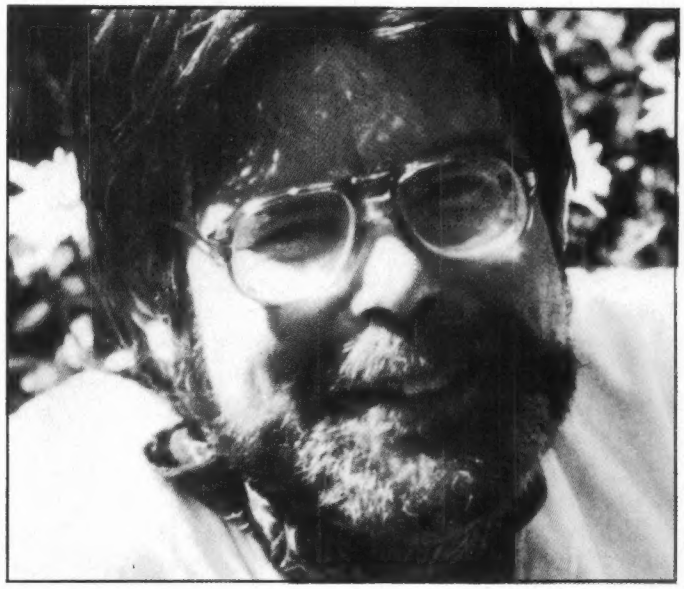
According to **Clive Barker**, the MPAA rejected the film no less than four times, which is by no means a record but can provoke serious disquiet among the film-makers concerned. Barker also mentioned that one member of the board remarked to director **Tony Randel** that if New World took out everything the MPAA had wanted 'You wouldn't have a movie left' . . . or words to that effect.

The increased conservatism of the Reagan/Bush era has meant the MPAA are giving horror films a very hard time.

While discussing the subject with Barker during his visit to New York, he informed me that had *Hellraiser* been submitted to the British Board of Film Classification prior to its submission to the MPAA, we would have seen a marginally stronger version of the picture in the UK.

Now that the theatrical version of *Hellbound* has been cut, New World is looking to put the US video version out unrated next year. That'll give US audiences the chance to see a more or less uncut version, but because the UK doesn't have a parallel rating we may well see the MPAA version.

CASTLE ROCK KING



King of the Castle

RUMOURS about the publication of Steve King's laundry list have proved to be without foundation. But for King junkies desperate for some mention of their hero some help is at hand.

Castle Rock is the only official Stephen King newsletter. The editor's column alone is full of news about new King books and short story appearances. Then there are reviews of books and movies, articles on all aspects of Kingdom, interviews with King's contemporaries, a comprehensive classified section where you can buy anything connected with King (except the laundry list –ED) and a lot more besides.

Edited one of King's personal secretaries, **Stephanie Leonard**, the paper started publication in January 1985. Early issues contained original fiction, *Dolan's Cadillac* – soon to be published as regular and deluxe limited editions by Lord John Press, USA. (All copies were sold prior to publication. The regular edition cost £100.00, the deluxe £250.00; now already selling for £250.00 and £400.00 respectively.)

Tabitha King, Steve's wife and a a brilliant author in her own write, published *Roadkill* in *Castel Rock* and King regularly contributes articles and comments on points raised by readers.

Castel Rock is published monthly, but twice a year a double issue appears – so you get eight single issues and two doubles. British subscriptions cost £25.00 surface mail, £40.00 airmail. King junkies can contact the publisher at Castle Rock, *PO Box 8183, Bangor, Maine, 04401, USA* – and rest assured that when the laundry list is published it will appear in *Castle Rock*.

Paddy McKillop

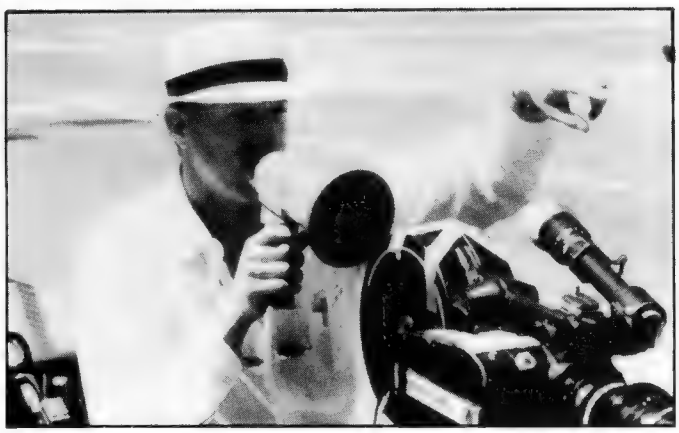
MOST PROMISING . . .

DECEMBER is the time of year when everyone starts to compile lists of the year's best. Here's the rundown of the top scoring fantasy/horror films and books in the US for '88. Make sure you catch all of the entries on this checklist when they arrive in the UK.

Movies: *The Blob, Near Dark, The Stepfather, Robocop, Dead Ringers, Bettlejuice, Nightmare on Elm Street IV: The Dream Master.*

Most Disappointing Movie: Romero's *Monkey Shines.*
Books: *Mona Lisa Overdrive,* **William Gibson;** *The Scream,* **John Skipp and Craig Spector;** *Queen of the Damned,* **Anne Rice:** *Silence of the Lambs,* **Thomas Harris;** *The Kill Riff,* **David J. Schow;** *Prime Evil,* edited by **Douglas E. Winter;** *Silver Scream,* edited by **David J. Schow**

HIDDEN DEPTHS



Jack Sholder-ing the burden

As the superb science fiction action picture THE HIDDEN opens in Britain's cinemas, its director Jack Sholder is working on a new movie in Canada. Despite a heavy night's shooting schedule he took time out to talk to John Gilbert in Toronto about his love of thrillers, his attitude toward horror films, his involvement with NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET II, and his new project, RENEGADES

Jack Sholder isn't a horror fan, yet it was horror in the form of *A Nightmare on Elm Street II* that gave him the financial clout to do his latest release *The Hidden*. 'I wasn't a kid who grew up reading horror. It was never my life goal to make horror films, but because of Nightmare II there was *The Hidden*.'

Despite critical condemnation, the second Freddy Krueger movie made more money than the original and its US production company were impressed enough to push Sholder into another project. He took an immediate liking to Bob Hunt's script, about a human-inhabiting alien called Gallagher (Kyle MacLachlan) who teams up with police detective Beck (Michael Nouri) to track down an evil insectoid alien who possesses the bodies of humans, including that of an old man, called Wallis, and a beautiful hooker.

'The script contained a lot of thriller elements. It's a cop movie with an unusual element and has a great thrust to it. There are two good characters and it's the kind of script I might have written.'

FAMILY TIES

Indeed Sholder did add some of his own personality and movie knowledge to the script, although he stresses that he did not rewrite it. One deliciously understated FX sequence that he included shows a tendril wriggling out of the bad alien's arm. You don't actually see the burst-out sequence, but the slow hypnotic dance of that dull red tendril shows that there's something inside the human body.

'I put that into the script. It struck me as the time to wake the audience up a bit. It was also funny to have this thing wearing a human body. All the scenes where he keeps looking in the mirror and seeing that he's now a dirty old man and he's in a body which he can't quite control. It's macabre and humorous.'

Sholder also added the policeman's daughter to the story. The good alien's own daughter has been killed. He has parental feelings toward the daughter, feelings which were developed during the action rather than a lull in the plot. 'It was hard to make the relationship between Beck and his wife work because you can't take time in an action movie to develop the relationship.'

As a result the end of the movie was also changed. The first ending had Wallis escaping in the body of a US senator, but Sholder saw the opportunity to add more feeling and now leaves the movie on an emotional high . . . no, we're not giving it away!

OPEN WIDE

Kyle MacLachlan, who won critical acclaim in *Dune* and *Blue Velvet*, is perfect for the role of alien Gallagher. He's well known for his understated performances and cool appearance but Sholder makes a surprising admission about the casting of *The Hidden*. 'Kyle was not my first choice and he was cast rather late. I feel he gives a brave performance to do very little. Most of it is hidden. There's a lot of feeling in his character but he acts with his eyes. He used an old acting exercise for the part where you put on a mask and act through it. When shooting he acted as if he was in that mask.'

Some of the special effects caused a stir amongst the film's preview audiences. The most explicit shot is of the insectoid alien exiting the wide open mouth of its last victim and leaping between the lips of its next, Wallis; the ugly monster was used to show the alien's evil nature while the good alien radiates light during its transfer; but didn't the MPAA have anything to say about that sequence?

'We had no trouble with the censors. Thirty-four people get killed in the movie but the violence is not that graphic and the film ends on a positive note. It's also enjoyable and I think that the censors took all of that into mind.'

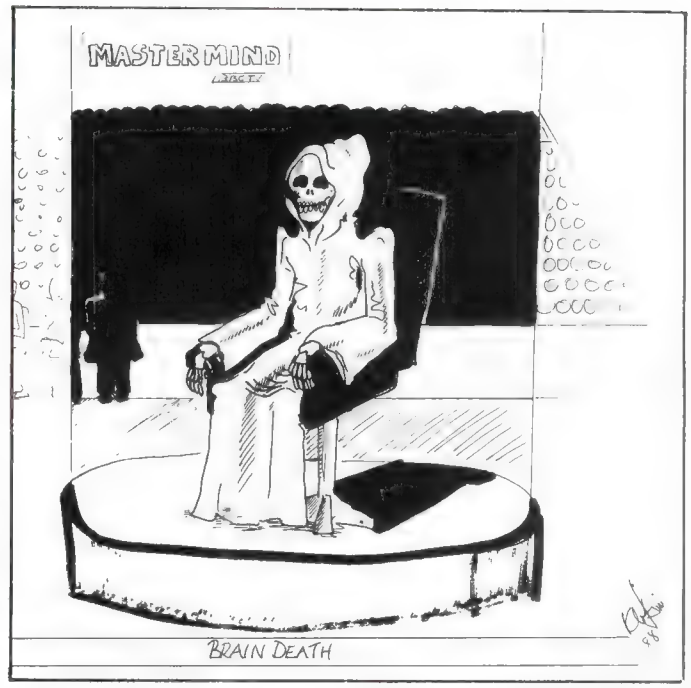
Above: Kyle Machachlan stars as FBI agent Lloyd Gallagher in *The Hidden*. Below: aftermath of a violent shootout

Sholder's new movie, *Renegades*, starring Keifer Sutherland and Jamie Gertz of *Lost Boys* fame, contains the thriller elements noticeable in *The Hidden* but moves out of the fantasy/science fiction genres.

'It's more basically a cop-buddy action picture about a cop and an Indian who develop a peculiar relationship and hunt down the bad guys. It's like *The Hidden* but everyone's from Earth. It's backed by Universal and you'll see it next summer.'

RAISING THE DEAD

Here's a dead letter box. It's up to you to fill it, so contact us with your comments, chastise us with your criticisms and warm up our winter days – and nights. Send your letters or artwork to RAISING THE DEAD, FEAR, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB



IT DOWN DRAIN?

Dear **FEAR**
You asked for comments on the price of your magazine. I think £2.50 is a fair price considering the quality of print and photos etc. A reduction in price would reduce the amount of colour included which could only be a backward step. After all, £2.50 every two months shouldn't drain too many pockets.

Going back to **Jan Perfect**'s letter in Issue Two, an American television series of Stephen King's *IT* novel is mentioned. You say there's little chance of it being shown on British Television. How about it being released in video form? Surely British fans deserve a chance of seeing this adaptation of an amazing book?
Keith Graness, Newton Abbot, Devon

Having heard reports about the production of this television series I'm not sure whether King fans would want to see it. None of the major video companies have picked up an option on the mythical beast, not even Entertainment in Video, and – despite ardent enquiries by Stephen King fans – it appears to have dropped out of sight.

RE-ANIMATOR

Dear **FEAR**
As a horror genre buff I have been particularly impressed with the recent work of Stewart Gordon. His work has a gritty, visceral quality. The humour in *Re-animator* was inspired and the intensity of *From Beyond* echoed the otherworldly despair of *Hellraiser*, another of my recent faves. These films have demonstrated the most consistently perverse, intense, and sordid reality sets. Perhaps a feature on the work of Stewart Gordon is in order at some point.
David Green, Chichester, W. Sussex

We'll make it one of our main New Year's Resolutions to get an interview with him in the near future. And I've not broken one New Year's Resolution from last year – well, perhaps that's because I didn't make any.

ROYLE FEAST

Dear **FEAR**
Things are definitely looking up in the magazine world. first I find a new women's magazine that doesn't think of me as model-cum-Superwoman, but which talks to me at my level; now I find **FEAR**, which talks to me as a viewer/reader/writer, all three of which are extremely important, but not necessarily in that order.

Critical letters may well come in the future, or when I have something of vital importance to say about the world in which you deal. Right now it is bouquet time, especially for snaring something from Nicholas Royle. I first came across his first-class fiction in the ill-fated *Jennings* magazine, and realised he was a force to be reckoned with. The story you published proved it yet again.

I am subscribing to your magazine, something I rarely do. Money is tight but it is for most writers who do not live, eat and breathe in the world of bestseller, so it says a lot for the quality of **FEAR** that hard earned pennies are being expended in this way.
Dorothy Davies, Faringdon, Oxon

Yes, Mr Royle is rather good. As a Christmas treat you'll find another story by him on page 56.

HISTORY RECORDS

Dear **FEAR**

While I'm a great fan of Shaun Hutson, going right back to his *Slugs* days, I feel that I must defend Guy N. Smith who Shaun accuses of ripping off James Herbert (Issue Two). Smith started publishing short stories in the Fifties and had his first novel, *Werewolf by Moonlight*, published in 1973 – a long way from *Rats*. If Mr Hutson doesn't believe me perhaps he should read the Guy N. Smith interview in your last issue.
Robert Padmore, Eastleigh, Hants

One point about inter-author criticism – outrageous or deserved – is that it does get reaction from fans, which in turn serves to put the picture straight. There's certainly no arguing with the fact that Guy was writing fiction which could be called similar in attack and theme to that which Herbert was later to write before him – and after.

OUT OF THE CLOSET

Dear **FEAR**
I just had to write and say how great I think **FEAR**is. This is not just another creep letter, you've managed to put together a very exciting and stimulating read.

I wonder if you could tell me if any *new* novels of Gary Brandner's are going to be published in the UK, and if so, when?
D.E. Custons, East Dulwich, London

Gary has two novels out which haven't been published in the UK. The first is Cameron's Closet, *about a young boy who befriends an avenging demon in his bedroom closet – and in fact you'll be able to see the film before you read the book, when it goes on theatrical release in February. The other book is* Floater. *It's about astral projection and, as far as we know, is not likely to have a UK release until the late-spring of 1989.*

McCAMMON NO COPYCAT

Dear **FEAR**
At last! The interview I thought I'd never read, A STING IN THE TALE (Issue Three), was excellent to say the least.

As a devoted fan of Robert R. McCammon I must congratulate Stanley Wiater on a job well done (although I was left rather confused as to how anyone could possibly accuse McCammon of imitating Stephen King).

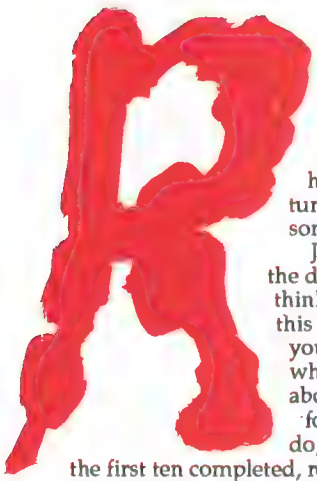
Apart from the obvious genre, I for one could find no similarities whatsoever, and in view of the fact that I am an ardent follower of both authors – not to mention many others – I think my views are totally unbiased and the views of some critics – whoever they are – to be totally unfounded.

Furthermore, when taken out of context these few words rather aptly say it all, don't you think? . . . 'any resemblance to persons living or dead is purely coincidental'.
Stephen Hilton, Blackburn, Lancs

It's this damned pigeon-holing thing again! Critics inevitably find it easier to describe anyone's work as a comparison to someone else's. In that light, surely there is a familiarity in feel (if not a similarity in tale?) between King's The Stand *and McCammon's* Swan Song? *In their mechanics, both novels set up unrelated characters whose lives before the (different) holocausts are gradually woven together after the disasters, and each revolves around a growth of magic as a result of what happens, pivoting on the fight between muthical good and evil.*

Whether this constitutes a case of imitation is probably up to the reader – and even if it does, is it very relevant? Both writers have an individual style, and I for one, have read both books greedily, recognising the similarities, relishing the differences and have been entertained and caused to think by both.

YOUR FEAR FACTOR!



ight, it's now eight months and four issues of FEAR, and we've all been working pretty hard to keep you entertained. Now it's your turn to do a bit of work — and get something for it, if you're lucky.

John Gilbert (the one who plays around in the dark) is most anxious to hear what you think of the show so far, and by filling in this questionnaire and returning it to us, you will be helping **FEAR** editorial assess what you do like and don't like so much about the magazine. Just to show gratitude for the heavy bit of filling in you're about to do, we'll give a six-issue subscription free to the first ten completed, returned forms to be drawn at random from Mr Gilbert's Lament Configuration Box in one month's time.

That's if nothing untoward happens when he opens it...

When you've filled in all the questions, cut the page out (or make a photocopy if you prefer) and return it to: **FEAR QUESTIONNAIRE, *PO Box 20, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*** just as fast as you can.

1 Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

2 Age: please ring the appropriate group **Male/Female**

Under 15 • 15-19 • 20-29 • 30-39 • 40-49 • over 50

3 Occupation .....

part-time/full-time (please delete the inappropriate)

4 On average, how many people including yourself read or look at your copy of FEAR?

1 2 3 4 5 6 MORE (please specify)

5 Which issues of FEAR have you read/looked at? **1 2 3 4**

6 Do you find it easy to get a copy of FEAR? **YES/NO**

7 Where do you buy your copy of FEAR? (please tick box)

- ❑ **Independent newsagent**
- ❑ **Retail chain** (eg WH Smith, J Menzies)
- ❑ **Specialist genre shop**
- ❑ **Subscription**

8 What are your favourite types of film? (please tick appropriate boxes)

❑ **Horror** ❑ **SF** ❑ **Fantasy**

9 How many videos do you rent a month:

1 2 3 4 5 MORE (please specify) ☐

10 How many videos do you buy a month:

1 2 3 4 5 MORE (please specify) ☐

11 Where from: (please tick appropriate box)

❑**WH Smith** ❑**J Menzies** ❑**Woolworth** ❑**Boots**

❑**Virgin** ❑**Other** (please specify).....

12 How often do you go to the cinema a year? (please ring group)

1-4 • 5-8 • 9-12 • MORE (please specify)

13 Have you found that FEAR has influenced your buying or renting of videos? **YES/NO/DON'T KNOW**

14 What are your favourite types of books? (tick appropriate box)

❑**Horror** ❑**SF** ❑**Fantasy**

15 How many books (Horror/SF/Fantasy) do you buy a year?

1-4 • 5-8 • 9-12 • MORE (please specify) ☐

16 Of the books you buy/read a year how many are:

- ❑**Hardback (mint condition)**
- ❑**Hardback (2nd-hand)**
- ❑**Paperbacks**
- ❑**Borrowed from library**
- ❑**Borrowed from friends**

17 Where do you buy your books?

- ❑**Independent newsagent**
- ❑**General bookshop**
- ❑**Retail chain** (eg WH Smith, J Menzies etc)
- ❑**Specific genre shop**
- ❑**Book Clubs**

18 Are you interested in buying special/limited edition books?

YES/NO

19 Please indicate your preferences of FEAR sections, giving **1** to the best and **16** to the least favourite:

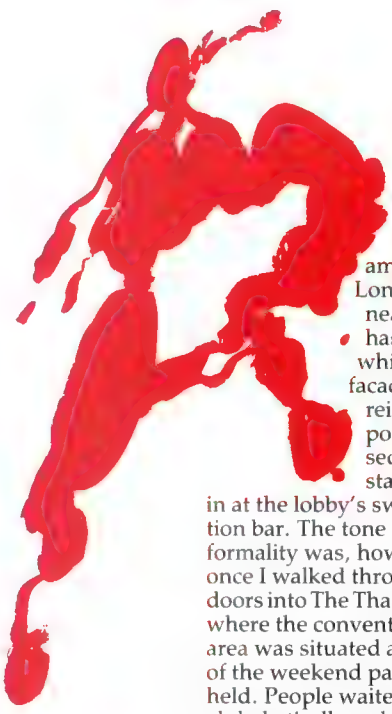
- ☐ Dark Playground
- ☐ News (Union Hack, American Nightmares)
- ☐ Pro-Files
- ☐ FEAR Fiction
- ☐ How to Make a Movie
- ☐ Movie Mainline
- ☐ Video Vibes
- ☐ Off the Shelf
- ☐ Location Shots
- ☐ Set Report
- ☐ Fan-File
- ☐ FEAR Factor
- ☐ The Spook
- ☐ Raising the Dead (letters)
- ☐ FEAR Competitions
- ☐ FEAR Mail Order

20 Below are some topics regularly covered by FEAR, please indicate your opinion of the amount of coverage given:

TOPIC	TOO MUCH	ABOUT RIGHT	TOO LITTLE
Video			
Films			
Books			
Film Producers/directors			
Well-known authors			
New authors			
General news			
Fiction			

THE WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION

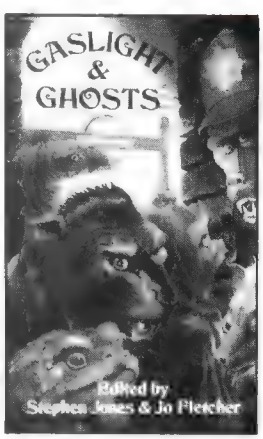
Hallowe'en this year spelled something special for British fantasy, horror, and science fiction fans. The World Fantasy Convention, usually held in the States, visited London for a magnificent festival of the fabulous. It won't reappear in this country until 1991, so editor John Gilbert gathered the FEAR clans and stayed until the bitter end (actually, he prefers larger)



Thursday October 27

amada Inn West, London, located near Earls Court, has an imposing white concrete facade which is reinforced by the polite, well-dressed members of staff who book you in at the lobby's sweeping reception bar. The tone of almost curt formality was, however, dispelled once I walked through the double doors into The Thames Foyer Suite where the convention's reception area was situated and where most of the weekend parties would be held. People waited in alphabetically ordered queues for organisers to sign them in, while stewards hurriedly stuffed free books, magazines, a poster, programme booklet, and the convention's short story and article collection *Gaslight and Ghosts* into special delegate goodie bags.

A few copies of *Gaslight and Ghosts* are still available and can be obtained from The World Fantasy Convention, *130 Park View, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6JU* – please remember an SAE.



Registration over, the action moved to the Forbidden Planet Superstore in London's Westend, where one of the biggest collections of fantasy authors under one roof congregated to sign copies of *The Best Horror from Fantasy Tales* – published by Robinson. We can certainly recommend the collection to you as contributors include old friends **Clive Barker, Ramsey Campbell** and **Brian Lumley**. Also there was **Lucius Sheperd** to sign copies of his brilliant new book, *Life During Wartime* and **Robert Holdstock** whose sequel to *Mythago Wood*, has just been published by Century.

The ubiquitous Clive Barker with Ramsey Campbell signing books at Forbidden Planet

Back at the hotel the Fontana Fantasy Reception was underway, starring **Clive Barker** – the convention's Master of Ceremonies – **Stephen R. Donaldson, Mike Jefferies** and **Stephen Marley**. Barker's next book is *Cabal*, due out in paperback January 29, while Donaldson's new novel, *A Man Rides Through*, is published in February – see our interview with him next issue.

Afterward **Douglas Winter** introduced author readings from *Prime Evil*, the showcase horror anthology of which he's editor. Despite the late hour the readings were well attended and those who weren't listening were in the bar, reacquainitng themselves with old friends and London beer rather than in their expensive bedrooms.

Friday October 28th

The official start of the convention: by 10.00am there was a busy queue at the registration desk while those who had stayed overnight either looked in on a discussion panel called Small Presses: Quality For Sale, went to view *Battle of The Wizards* on video or listened in on the reading by **Ellen Kushner**.

The panel was the most notable event of the hour for its members included French translators/publishers **Jean Daniel Breque** and **Patrick Marcel**, and **Donald M. Grant** who brought the famous limited editions of Stephen King's *Dark Tower* books. It's a pity that so few of our British presses were represented on that particular outing, but I suppose you can't have everything.

The discussion panels continued throughout the day, best of which were From Paper Dream to Silver Screen, Deadlier than The Male and Murky Nightmares.

Midnight Horror: some panel members confer, left to right: Thomas Monteleone, Steve Rasnic Tem, Joe R. Lansdale, Douglas L. Winter. Where's Clive Barker?

The Silver Screen panel brought out – among others – **Clive Barker**, guest of honour **James Herbert**, **Ramsey Campbell**, moderator **Craig Miller** and **Dennis Etchison** to talk about turning books into movies and vice versa. The panel got slightly bogged down in the general problems of the movie business rather than the technicalities of the process – in fact, many of the panel titles were hijacked over the weekend in favour of other, related, topics.

The Deadlier than the Male panel was, what's been described at other UK conventions as, the token women's discussion – although to be fair the ladies did get more of a look in at this convention than some other events I've been to.

The impressive lineup included **Ellen Datlow** who works on *Omni* magazine, **Barbara Hambley** who's just written one hell of a vampire horror novel and **Lisa Tuttle**, an American horror authoress who prefers to live in Britain – what taste. The talk was again of horror though, again, the title was a little restrictive and I couldn't decide from the discussion whether women are better at it than men – personally the most vivid fiction I've read has come from women writers; take Tuttle's *Gabriel* as one instance.

Murky Nightmares, again with **James Herbert**, this time surrounded by horror authors **Ronald Chetwynd-Hayes**, **Stephen Gallagher**, **Charles L. Grant**, **Xavier Legrande-Ferronnife** and **Brian Lumley**. The purpose of this panel: to find out whether the writers concerned would rather hide the horror or kiss and tell all in gory detail – and there were some surprises.

Brian Lumley for instance, whose books include some graphic gore, would rather hint than show, as would Charles L. Grant. Stephen Gallagher, however, preferred to let circumstance dictate and James Herbert preferred to show what was happening rather than hide it under a stain-proofed rug.

Saturday October 29

Art was one of the highpoints on Saturday's menu as the WFC invited conventioneers to drink with the fantasy genre's image makers. Among the guests were artist guest of honour **Michael Foreman**, **Chris Achilleos**, **Bob Eggleton** and **Tom Kent**, whose work could be savoured during the convention's art show. Too little attention is paid to those people, so it was a delight to see them finally being doused under the brightest spotlight in the house.

At 7.30pm – and separated from the artists party by a preview of **Gary Kurtz**'s new science fiction thriller, *Slipstream*, and an array of panels, videos and readings – the Science Fiction Blues got underway. A fabulous revue of prose and poetry readings by **Brian Aldiss**, **Ken Campbell** and **Petronia Whitfield**. It was all too quickly followed by The Fabulous Fantasy Raffle.

Hosted by **Stephen Jones** and **Jo Fletcher**, the raffle is a regular event at British Fantasy Cons and the prizes were – for the most part – magnificent. Most impressive of all was a limited cased edition of *Prime Evil*, signed by all contributors and enough to get any fan slavering. Also up for grabs was some tasty promotional material for **Stephen King**'s *Misery*, copies of **Brian Stableford**'s *Empire of Fear* and, along with every prize, two free tickets for the showing of **Clive Barker**'s *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* – the uncut version – to be shown on Hallowe'en morn. All proceeds went to the Great Ormond Street Hospital's charity.

There was a choice of major treats in store after the Raffle. You could either go and see the charity premier of *Hellbound* at the National Film Theatre – see The Spook's version of events in this issue – or sit down for the annual Gaslight and Ghosts panel, held at 11-12pm which included Barker, Herbert, Winter, **Stephen Laws** and **Steve Rasnic Tem**. It was a knockdown battle amongst the horror heavyweights which, again, only The Spook could adequately describe – see page 78. Let's just say that Mr Barker almost had his neck stretched!

Sunday October 30

It was a slow start. Delegates dragged themselves from their beds – which had hardly been soiled as the drinking had gone on into the early hours.

The morning's major event was the art auction, presided over by Clive Barker, which raised some top prices of up to £300, and a few hackles on the back of some bidders' necks. It was surrounded by a now obligatory panel on fantasy world creation, a panel on combining elements of fantasy and science fiction called Bounding Across The Genres, a Horror Writers of America presentation by president Charles L. Grant and the British Fantasy Society's AGM.

By 2.30pm delegates were ravenous. Fortunately, the British and World Fantasy Awards Banquet was about to get underway so we were all able to sit down and eat. The entrées were as unpalatable as rubber but the rest of the meal was fine and the destinations of the awards was downright agreeable.

James Herbert contemplates his next meeting with Clive Barker

FEAR, of course, had to stick its oar in with a party to round off the convention. It went down very well, as did the 30 litres of wine and great deal of conversation. Monday was officially cancelled and, eventually, we left the hotel – much to the relief of the the staff, no doubt – planning to go to the British Fantasy Convention next year and another World Fantasy Convention held in the UK in 1991.

The spoils of gore: Clive Barker with his trophy and fan, FEAR Competition winner Simon Beech

Keeping up with Clive is just too much for FEAR Editor John Gilbert

Controversy has always howled around the films of Canadian director David Cronenberg. His fantasy movies, THE BROOD, VIDEODROME and the remake of THE FLY, all tremendous commercial successes, have proved uncompromisingly weird and harrowing. FEAR's Tim Lucas talks to him about his latest film, DEAD RINGERS, which lacks none of his powerful movie trademarks and has left his critics in awe

NO

Hollywood is a town that knows the value of striking while the iron is hot, and many film makers have doubled-up overnight success into new film projects in as little time. On the other hand, there's David Cronenberg.

Cronenberg's *Dead Ringers* is the latest film in an ongoing chain of dream projects – like *Platoon* and *The Last Temptation of Christ* – to have endured a decade of arrested development before wresting film stock from a major studio. If writing is 50 years behind painting, as Brion Gysin claimed, cinema is lagging at least ten years behind the imaginations of its best practitioners.

TL: Would you say that *Dead Ringers* is not a horror film but a drama that shares the same tones, attitude and vocabulary of a horror film?

DC: Yes, I would agree with that.

TL: I would suspect – as I did with *Videodrome* – that there's a certain element of your horror following that won't be able to follow you to this new level.

DC: I'm sure that's true, too. For one thing, on a very basic level, *Dead Ringers* is not a kid's movie. *Videodrome* wasn't a kid's movie either, but at least it had a lot of neat special effects, so a kid could relate to that, or to the sexiness of it, and to Debbie Harry, even if it didn't quite quench one's thirst for a horror film. But I don't think this movie will do that.

Dead Ringers is a very adult movie with concerns that are very adult, and I'm sure that a lot of kids would be bored with it. I haven't tried it out yet on many kids, but I'm going to. I'll be very interested to see if teenagers can relate to it at all.

One of the cards we got at a preview said 'The breakfast scene didn't seem to suggest a very exciting relationship'. [Laughs] Obviously, somebody relatively young wrote that, because those were pretty realistic breakfast scenes, as far as I was concerned! You don't wake up every morning and have an exciting breakfast with the one you love, so I thought that was fairly funny. If this were a Demi Moore movie, and she was at the table with Rob Lowe, I'm sure their breakfast would be really exciting!

TL: You've been trying to get this picture made for about, what, ten years?

DC: Almost. The first draft was 1981 and I was thinking about it long before that.

TL: If you had made the movie ten years ago, what kind of film would it have been?

DC: It wouldn't have been as good. Because I wasn't as good. I have to assume that. I can't really define the differences because I didn't make it then, but I have to assume that I'm more mature and in better control of my craft.

TWINNED THEMES

TL: One of the film's major themes seem to be that, no matter how much we're attracted or drawn to other people, or dependent we become on them, that it's actually the element of ourselves which we notice in them which arouses us. And that we're all doomed to separateness, no matter how close we come to achieving a perfect complement with another person.

DC: Yes, there's a good deal of truth in that. But this movie works and reverberates on a lot of levels, as usual. I try to pack 'em pretty densely.

TL: Which of the other elements in the film did you find most personally compelling?

DC: Well, personally, from another angle: the whole question of identity and individuality. This is another way of approaching what you were just talking about, but the feeling that our physical bodies are . . . *us*. They are us and, therefore, we cannot be anybody else because we cannot physically be anybody else – even if we're identical twins. Yet there still *is* a connection, that sense of the body and the mind.

TL: You really don't get much of a sense of distinction between the twins when they're children. In fact, they seem intimidatingly sharp, alien and identical.

DC: Those scenes don't go on for very long and the suggestion is that, when you first meet them, it takes a while to tell them apart. The real-life father of those boys, [Nicholas and Jonathan Harley], though, will tell you that one of them is an Elliot and one is a Beverley and that they chose, themselves, which would play which role!

He also told me that it wouldn't do any good switching them around because, when no-one was looking, they would only switch themselves around again! Those scenes weren't designed to show their differences, but their similarities, their bonding and, as we get to know them, the further they get from the womb, so to speak, the greater their differences as they begin to emerge as individuals. The only difference is, in this film, there comes a point when they begin to re-fuse, back together and willingly surrender their personality to the other.

TL: We meet the twins, as children, walking along an immigrant Canadian street; I was wondering if there were any connections to the memories of your own boyhood on Crawford Street in Toronto? Did it cross your mind to shoot that scene there? Your own background is Lithuanian, isn't it?

DC: *Distant* background. It's not as if my mother had a Lithuanian accent. My mother was born in Toronto, my father was born in Baltimore. there are Lithuanian Jews but that really wasn't part of my upbringing at all. Mind you, Crawford Street *was* mostly Jews, who were just about to make money and move out to the suburbs instead, and Italians, Turks and Greeks. There were certain streets in the city where the latest waves of immigrants would come and, when they'd made it, move upscale; they'd head out to the suburbs and the next wave would come in.

"Our physical bodies are . . . *us*, therefore, we cannot be anybody else because we cannot physically be anybody else"

CONCESSIONS!

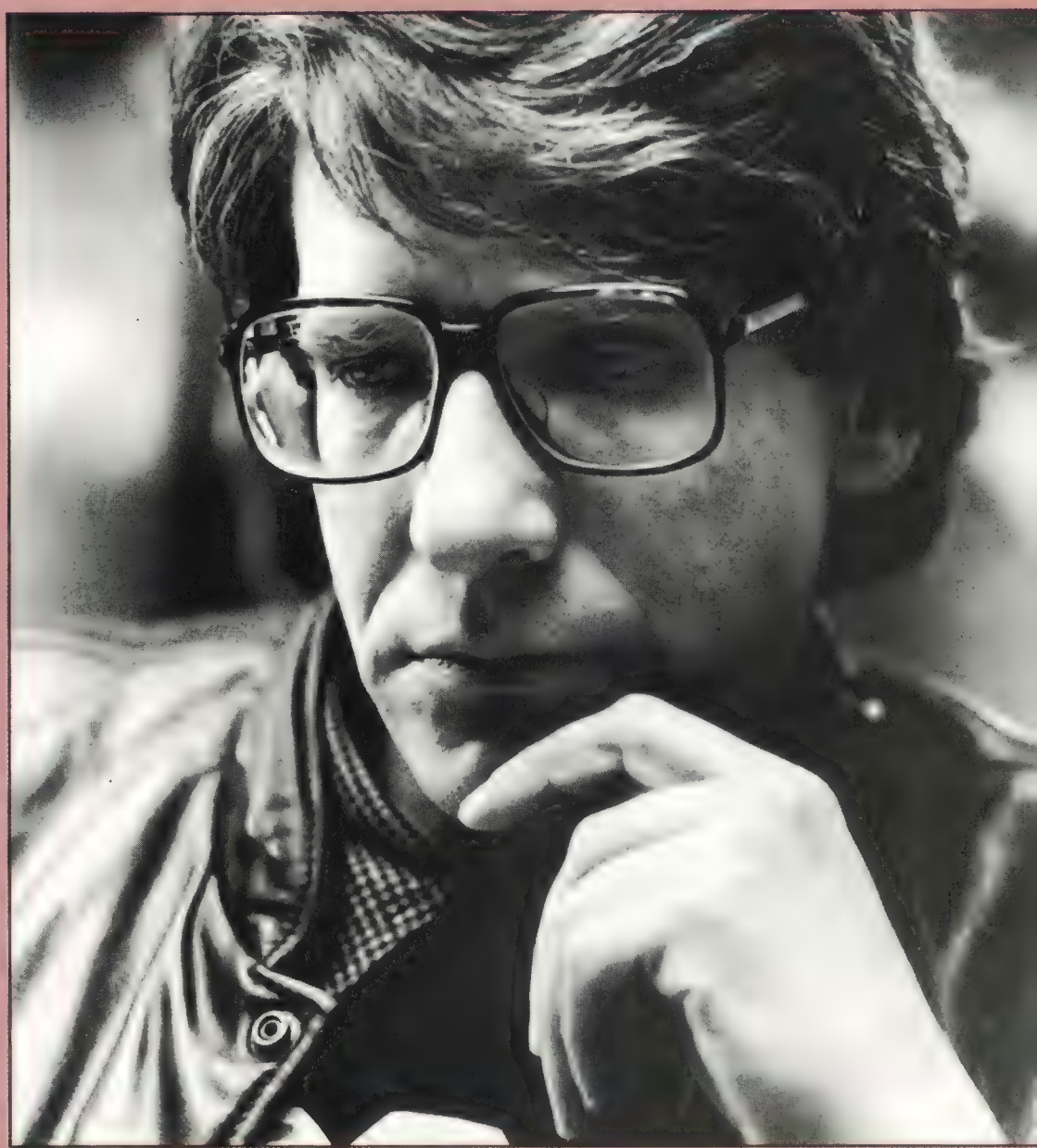
It's a process that is in fact still going on. That section of town is now primarily Portuguese, if I'm not mistaken. A great street to grow up on. Yes, we did try to recreate the feel of it. We had checked out Crawford Street first, but it had changed so much, it would've been an immense job, too much trouble, to make it 'period' again. Anything can be done, but this wouldn't have been worth the trouble. What's in the film is more like the Crawford Street I remember than Crawford Street *itself* is today.

IDENTICAL PERFORMANCES

TL: Describe Jeremy Irons as an individual.
DC: Jeremy's very bright, very precise, very controlled, but also very playful, very funny and very passionate about things as well, so he really covers all the ground. He was amusing and exciting to work with, and all that is up there on the screen. The movie requires him to do just about everything.
TL: Were there noticeable changes in his off-screen behaviour when he was required to shift performances from Bev to Elly, or vice versa?
DC: None. Absolutely none. I mean, certainly there were certain scenes that would scare him, and scared me too, and were very difficult, and he would be a little touchy during the shooting of them. But, speaking in general, he was never so engulfed by those characters that he *became* them. He's not a method actor; let's put it that way.

I think, a method actor would've had a hell of a time doing this. It's no secret that we approached a lot of actors before approaching Jeremy, because the part was written to fit a North American actor, so we didn't consider casting a British actor until we had exhausted the first choices among Americans.

Obviously, some of these guys turned us down because they didn't like the role, weren't interested, the usual reasons . . . but quite a few of them *were* interested in the part, but frankly admitted to me that they couldn't handle it. A method actor probably *couldn't* have handled it, because Jeremy was often required to jump back and forth from character to character many times throughout the course of a scene, because of the exigencies of shooting. Particularly in special effects scenes with both twins sharing the same frame, which meant doing one half, then doing the other half playing to the recorded dialogue of the first half. Then, when we shot the rest of the scene, he'd have to do it twice again. If you're not technically brilliant, you might as well forget it. You have to be a virtuoso.



TL: Nothing in *Dead Ringers* would be considered matter of course knowledge for an actor.
DC: We did provide Jeremy with some things to read about the effects of barbiturate addiction. I gave him my copy of Jeffcoate's *Principles of Gynaecology*. I also gave him Leslie Fielder's book *Freaks*, and *The Two*—a biography of Chang and Eng, the original Siamese twins. And we discussed symptoms of taking barbiturates, but we also were determined to feel free of all that, to feel free to invent. In essence, none of that really matters.

As usual, film tends to feel more accurate the more you wing it. Individuals react to drugs in very individual ways. We depended on each other to guide each other through all that, so it would work, so that it would be convincing, so that it would be horrible but not too horrible to watch.

"The movie is about the differences between men and women, much more so than about our similarities"

Dr Beverly Mantle (Jeremy Irons), Claire (Genevieve Bujold) and Dr Elliot Mantle (Irons again) in an eternal triangle that turns nasty when Beverly falls for his brother's girl

BREAKING THE YOKE

TL: Would you say those scenes will be humorous because they're so horrible that the viewer will instinctively put up a wall of defensive laughter?
DC: There's an element of that, as in any piece of black humour, but they're also just plain funny. It's no more than someone slipping on a banana peel – if it happens to you it hurts, but to the person watching, it's funny. Also, a lot of these scenes involve public embarrassment. There are scenes in *Dead Ringers*, like the acceptance speech at the Feldman Awards where Beverley makes his first public appearance in a drunken state, which are funny yet they're also painful, and that's the essence of black humour.

There's also an examination scene when a patient complains of something hurting, and Bev says, with more than an ounce of sarcasm 'This . . . *hurts*?' Well, in rushes, that's excruciatingly funny but, as many people pointed out, in the context of the scene, it ain't so funny. [In stage whisper] Well, it's still funny, but not *as* funny. For women, especially.
TL: Women who see this film will have a profoundly different reaction to it than its male audience, wouldn't you agree?
DC: Yes, it's inevitable. The movie is about the differences between men and women, much more so than about our similarities, and it's also about the difficulty of the two species coming together. This is a movie that has a built-in polarisation element, but, I believe, legitimately so.
TL: I've heard that your script ended with Claire coming into the clinic and finding Elly's syringe on the floor, pointing rather symbolically in her direction. I've also heard that you didn't use it?
DC: I shot it, but I was never really crazy about it. When I'm writing a script, I'm writing it, on one level, to be read. Some stuff might work on the page, but you never really intend to do it because it will never translate as well to the screen. I did shoot a great closeup shot of the hypodermic, but I didn't want the movie to close on a lecture about the evils of drug addiction – which that could have been.

The shot would've looked like 'Watch out, Claire – get off those pills, or the needle tolls for thee!' That's the Nancy Reagan interpretation. I also thought that by that point in the movie, the focus was down to just the audience and the twins. I did shoot Claire discovering the twins, but I didn't like the way it played.

FROM CLONES TO CANNIBALS

TL: Your name has been associated with a number of interesting projects in development, and I'd like to inquire where they stand. There was a rumour of your interest in a screenplay called *Alive!*. About a planeload of passengers downed in the Andes mountains who are forced into cannibalism to survive. *American Film* magazine recently named it one of the ten hottest unfilmed screenplays circulating in Hollywood.
DC: I thought it was a brilliant script, but I finally decided I didn't want to do it, for various reasons.
TL: Commercial reasons?
DC: You know me better than that! I just thought that, on a certain cerebral, or psychological level, there wasn't enough happening in the script for me. On other levels, it was brilliant and I think it would make a fantastic movie, but I needed more from it. There was no point in offering to rewrite it, because it was already fantastically good and there wouldn't have been any point in trying to make it something else.

It was a survival movie and one of the things that happen in survival situations is it cuts down on certain levels of discourse and exploration; and those interest me. And I'd need those to carry me through what would have to be a very difficult, rough and demanding shoot.

The people involved in the story are fairly simple people, so their reaction to the situation is relatively . . . I shouldn't say uneducated, but just young. Still, it's very haunting and there were some incredible visual details, very grotesque details. I met with the writer and told him all these things, adding that, if I decided not to do the movie in the end, it wasn't because I didn't think it was a great script.
TL: *Naked Lunch*?
DC: *Naked Lunch* is still a possibility. Jeremy Thomas [who produced *The Last Emperor* and *Aria*] and I have made an agreement on how we're going to do it, if and when we do it, and we still want to do it. I haven't written a word and, as you know, it's going to be another one of those challenges; it's not going to be easy.
TL: You've spent the last several years in adapting the works of other writers – Stephen King, Philip K. Dick, Wood and Geasland – and revising the scripts of other writers. It's been awhile since you've written an original screenplay. Not since *Videodrome* in 1983.
DC: Writing my drafts of *Dead Ringers* was very original work, mind you, but it didn't feel like a total, satisfying writing experience. And, certainly, I was not writing it alone. It was such a challenge, and it was so difficult.

Yes, I've been having an impulse to sit down and write something completely original.

"*Naked Lunch* is still a possibility. Jeremy Thomas and I have made an agreement on how we're going to do it, if and when we do it, and we still want to do it"

THE HOUSE

What secrets lie within the crumbling mansion of a once-proud Southern family?

THE EVIL

What is the malicious power that infects them all?

THE HORROR

With Mother's death comes the true terror of

THE UNLOVED

JOHN SAUL

His most eerie and suspenseful chiller yet!

OUT NOW IN BANTAM PAPERBACK

ARGUMENT

Suppose some Victorian experimenter had snatched from the future an object of the kind he could least easily have predicted: for instance, a half-charred segment of the centrefold of a men's magazine, with a picture on one side and text on the other referring to words that have acquired a brand-new sense . . .

Would his contemporaries have taken him seriously?

Transcript of an address given by Professor R U Shaw to the 19th Century Society for Advancement of Science and Industry, London, 188-

Gentlemen–

(Uproar in the hall; chairman calls for silence.)

Gentlemen, despite the rough welcome I am offered, it is my privilege, nay my duty, to report to you the fruits of my attempt to breach the wall of Time!

(Renewed disorder; chairman orders two persons evicted.)

The people making mock of me must be unfamiliar with the grand scale of the apparatus I constructed, which was so unfortunately destroyed a twelvemonth past–

(Cries of "Pull the other one!"; chairman threatens to close the meeting.)

Only those who never viewed the massed ranks of Leyden jars in which I stored the electrical forces generated by my Wimshurst and Faraday machines dare claim that I could not possibly have succeeded in my endeavour!

That much at least you grant, apparently. Thank you.

But, you will say, do I have evidence? Yes! Here it is, safely preserved between two panes of glass!

True, one might have wished for more than a tattered sheet of paper. But the energies I was striving to control at least exceeded my ability to confine them . . . I am sure you must all have heard the tragic tale of how, while I myself lay unconscious amid the flaming ruin of my ancestral home, my loyal servant Jonah Jones rushed from the wreckage with his very clothes ablaze, waving aloft the gauge of my success that he had retrieved. Would he could be with us tonight, but as a result of his experience he is incarcerated in the asylum at Colney Hatch, and its supervisor informs me he is unlikely to recover. Sanity being at least as precious as life itself, I am tempted to a quotation: "Greater love hath no man . . . !"

Yet and still, despite the misguided if well-intentioned interference of bystanders who treated his prize as no more than another brand brought to his burning, and flung him and it into a nearby stream, I contrived to rescue from its bank one small part of what he salvaged. It has been examined by several of my most distinguished colleagues–

(Outcry from audience; chairman repeats his willingness to close the meeting in event of further disturbance.)

I regard open-mindedness as a mark of true eminence, and unwillingness to listen as the reverse! "None so deaf–!"

(Laughter. Several persons leave the hall.)

Peace at last! Now let me review what has been learned after many months of struggle from this tantalising relic of the future, our unprecedented and perhaps also unrepeatable Glimpse of Tomorrow.

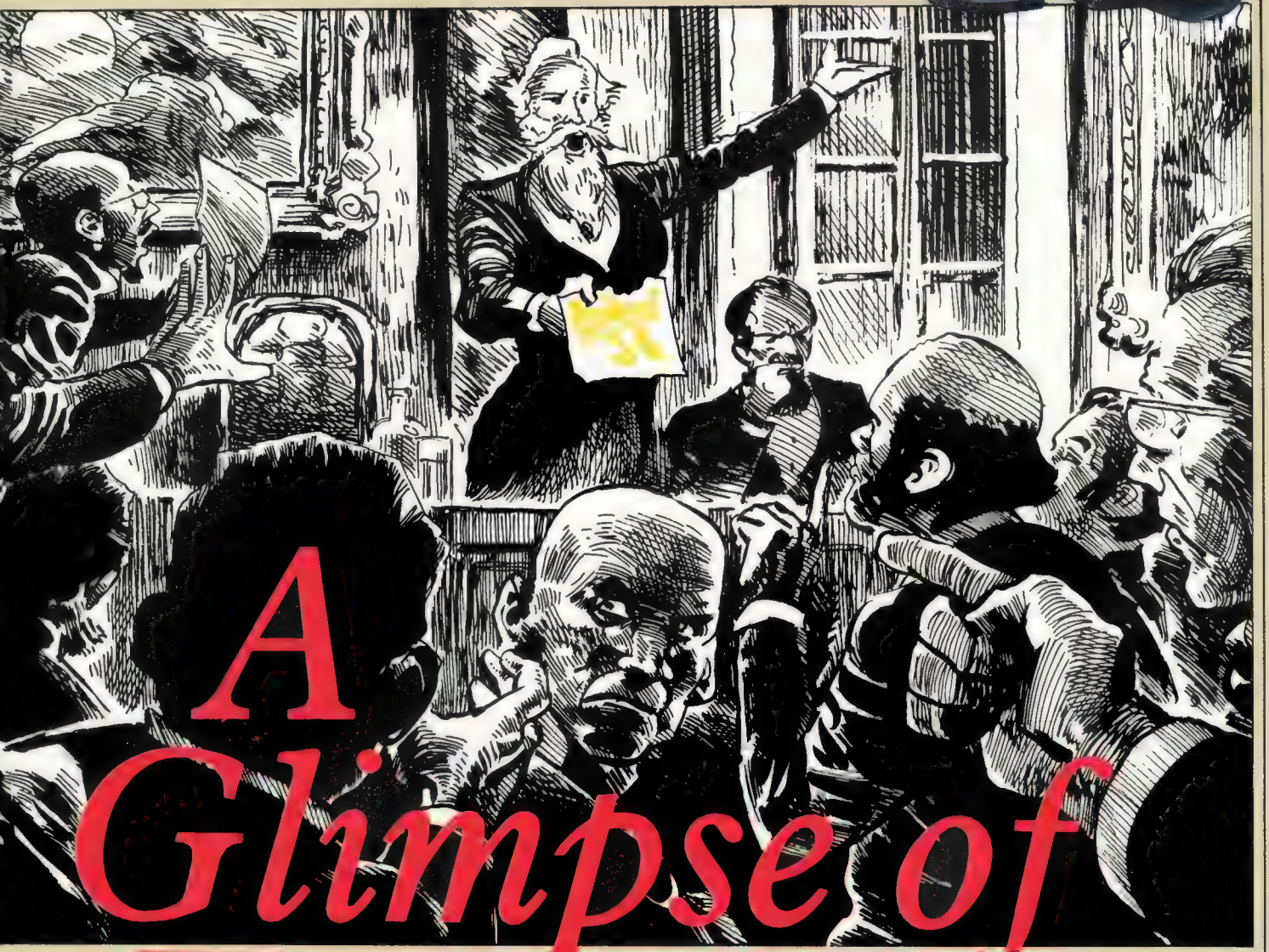
I am naturally heart-sick that all I can offer as the outcome of my lifetime of research, which has now reduced me to utter penury, should be a solitary page, and that imperfect. Yet it is enough to inform us that there will be a tomorrow, and permits us to picture a world such as the most daring among us have never dreamed of.

I choose the term "picture" advisedly. For there is no doubt in my mind, or in the minds of any of the disappointingly few of my colleagues who have cooperated in this investigation, that what we are dealing with is *an excerpt from a journal devoted to culture and the the fine arts.*

To lead you step by step along the chain of evidence which convinced me that I did indeed seize this specimen from the future might prove wearisome. Suffice it, then, to say that leading authorities in the field of paper-making are unanimous that no paper so durable, so smooth, or of such uniform thickness, could be forged or imitated in our day. That is entirely apart from the problem of how inks could be contrived so as to present on one side of the page such a remarkable, such an amazing, work of art.

"Authorities in the field of paper-making are unanimous that no paper so durable could be forged in our day"

Yes, gentlemen, *art*! Many among us have long maintained that the advent of photography will supersede the ancient style of painting in oils on canvas. For the first time we have proof. The obverse of the page depicts the feet and lower limbs of a young lady of somewhat dusky complexion, reclining on a pile of silken cushions, represented with a fidelity that, were it the achievement of some contemporary painter, would instantly cause him to be hailed as a grand master. Better that someone like Mr Ruskin should pass a final judgment on this marvel, but in my own humble opinion it is as evocative of the greatness of the civilisation that produced it as, say, a detached marble hand recovered by an excavator among the temples of Greece or Rome. M Lebraye of Paris, who visited my laboratory while I was at work on the pictorial side of the page, suggested that we denominate this unborn Daughter of Eve "An Odalisque of Tomorrow". In view of his familiarity



A Glimpse of Tomorrow

BY JOHN BRUNNER

with the work of Ingres and others of that school, I seized on his proposal. Let her be famous by that name before her birth!

But what of the other and far more revealing side of the page? – which, by the way, is available for inspection by those with proper credentials. I am open to, nay, eager for, suggestions that may help to unravel the remaining mysteries implied in these incomplete sentences. Several points, though, are already clear.

As I mentioned, what we have is a page from a magazine devoted to culture and the fine arts. Were the reproduction of a photograph in full colour, a technique far beyond our present feeble skills, not already sufficient to convince us of the strides our descendants have made – forgive me, but I no longer think of them as being "in the womb of Time" now that I have had so direct a contact with them – and that in itself leads to all sorts of implications for theologians and philosophers, but this is neither the time nor the place . . .

(At this point Mr Shaw was overcome by emotion.)

I beg your pardon. Whenever I reflect on the character of the main subject of the text which, howsoever marred, one can recover from the verso of the page, I am not ashamed to admit that tears spring to my eyes. I was about to say: were not the testimony of experts concerning the paper and ink, and of takers of photographic pictures concerning the accuracy of the image which is, never forget, in perfectly natural colour – were all that not already enough to satisfy the world as to the magnitude of my achievement, then the nobility of the personage implied by the words that now lie before us would be more than enough to win over the most obdurate.

What do we find? Indisputably, a dialogue in which some person assigned by the proprietor of the magazine is, to use the cant term, "interviewing" in his private house a self-made man of the utmost probity and rectitude, such that his example is to be held up for emulation before the general public! Rising from plebeian origins, our hero – I cannot resist the temptation to call him so – has attained eminence in a country other than his own, and triumphantly exemplified the principles of Mr Samuel Smiles!

Our hero, then . . . But let me spell out his history.

At the moment when his words first become legible (and how dearly one would wish to see what preceded this passage!) he is speaking of his youth. His father, it appears, intended him for one of those tasks which, lowly though they be, underpin the very

"I am open to suggestions that may help unravel the mysteries implied in these incomplete sentences"

fabric of society, and will incontestably remain essential, for we read: "ad wanted me to follow him into the Tanks". In other words, he was to devote his life to the provision of pure water for the citizens of some vast city, a need which I have emphasised unceasingly for many years. The capital T implies the indispensability of such a service.

Our hero – I shall continue to call him so – chooses, however, for reasons we can barely guess at, to apply himself to a yet humbler and more ancient calling, for he decides to "go in for broadcasting" – that is, become one who, in the words of the hymn known to us all, "ploughs the field and scatters the good seed on the land". Such humility is remarkable, but it meets its just reward.

As well as plying his trade, our hero excels in athletic pastimes, for he wins "the big prize in a football pool" – a vivid hint of some as-yet unguessable combination of the grace of the aquatic with the energies of the terrestrial sportsman. Thanks to his victory in competition, he is able to fulfill his ambition and become a rock singer.

Despite the curious lack of a capital R, which I take to be an error by the printer, one instantly thinks of the Apostle Peter, and of that other hymn which we owe to the Reverend Mr Toplady, *Rock of Ages*. One can picture him yearning for a more spiritual existence than that of the career devoted to physical activity already opening before him, *pace* Mr Charles Kingsley and his championing of "muscular Christianity". It is his desire to use another talent that the Lord has granted him, a fine singing voice, which leads him to the moral deserts of the New World, where he reaps the full harvest of his manifold endeavours.

Such is his success that we encounter him in what is plainly the home of someone well to do, large enough to shelter many employees. He affords accommodation to a number of "model girls", and from this we may deduce that he has allied himself with that cause which in our own day meets with such despicable neglect, the advancement of the weaker sex in knowledge of the arts and sciences.

They come from backgrounds even humbler than his own, for one is described as a "gatefold girl", no doubt one who kept watch at the entrance to a sheep-pen. We may venture further, and hypothesise that he may have recruited some among the fallen of the streets, in the manner of Mr. Gladstone. His success in promoting their re-education is underlined by the reference made to one of them "rolling a joint" – in other words, applying the principles of *massage* to heal an injured limb – and to another "fixing hot dogs", which, in the unhealthy climate of Western North America, constitutes proof positive that his concerns extend not only to our own species but to those creatures whose undeserved suffering so engages The Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, which now benefits, to the satisfaction of all right-thinking persons, from Royal patronage.

(Scattered applause.)

He did not, of course, at once attain such enviable good fortune. He says in so many words: "For a long time I lived on junk food". I take this to be yet another sign of his commiseration with the poor and backward of our planet, inasmuch as it shows he must have survived on such fare as a poor Chinese seaman, or coolie, has to eat. M Lebraye, having travelled extensively in the Orient, maintains that Asiatic cuisine at its best can rival our own diet, and may one day invade the kitchens of the West. But this I regard as most improbable. The Roast Beef of Old England is unlikely to be displaced so easily by slant-eyed peasants!

However that may be, we find our hero at ease in, as I remarked before, a large and comfortable home, surrounded by an extensive retinue. He has a computer – and who can that be other than a clerk engaged to administer his by now considerable income? Moreover he has a typewriter to deal with his correspondence, conceivably one of the poor female waifs he has rescued and taught a useful trade.

Beyond a peradventure his own artistic talents are not confined to the music which has brought him fame. He "puts on a cartoon film", for example. A cartoon being a rough sketch made by an artist prior to attacking his canvas, it might well be imposed on a thin film to make it easier to trace over. Here we have evidence that painting as we know it will survive, albeit perhaps only as a "hobbyhorse" for the gifted amateur. Can one almost see him, brow furrowed in deep thought, pondering a choice of colours for the masterpiece he has in mind to ornament his home?

Similarly, reference to his "tape collection" leads us into yet another area of rewarding speculation. As one would have imagined, our hero is as involved with industry as he is with the arts, and offers us assurance that the factories which today pour out the wealth of Britain to the "round world's imagin'd corners" will continue to flourish in the future of which we have here so rich and fructifying a glimpse. When he says he lives in "the age of the jet plane and the space shuttle", moving across the loom in three dimensions instead of two, will be obvious to anyone boasting an acquaintance with textile manufacture.

Much work, of course, remains to be done. Whereas it is undeniable that his "car" must be a road-going vehicle, and that the problem of self-propulsion has been solved using nothing more exotic than the coal-gas which in our own day lights, if not yet all our homes, then at least meeting-halls such as this (though admittedly his phrase "how hard it was to get enough gas" suggests an occasional shortage), one is baffled by it being described as "supercharged" . . . until one realises that when our hero rides abroad he has to be accompanied by his entire entourage together with their trunks and other luggage. This is no more than one would expect of a gentleman in his position.

And there is also the mystery of why so many articles in his home are described as "plastic". Do we here gain insight into a strange new world where even furniture has to be malleable, so that it may fulfil a number of different functions as and when they are called for? Used as we are to the solid immutability of our own chairs, tables and so forth, we may yet have to grow accustomed to an age where the brilliance of inventors has devised several, maybe scores, of new purposes for everything we own!

What grand perspectives are thus displayed before us!

My time, I regret to see, is almost up, so I must pass over our hero's interest in experimental chemistry, indicated by reference to this frequent use of acid, and many other fascinating data.

But I can leave you with one most reassuring fact. Almost the only area of text that has survived intact on this remarkable sheet of paper is at the lower left-hand corner. It is plainly an advertisement, not greatly different from those of our own day, and it invites the readers to send – I blush, almost, to say how much money, yet I dare suppose in times to come, with greater general wealth, it may appear to be good value – 12 dollars and 95 cents in order to obtain a book entitled *Techniques of Oral Intercourse*. This publication is said to be illustrated, presumably for the benefit of those, such as election candidates and after-dinner speakers, who need to accompany what they say with appropriate gestures.

It is a vast relief – is it not? – to learn from this brief but dizzying glimpse of our wondrous tomorrow that at least the ancient art of conversation will not by then have fallen into total disregard!

(General uproar; mass exodus. Professor Shaw collapses. Medical assistance sent for. Meeting closed.)

JOHN BRUNNER is a consummate British science fiction author. His novel output, which includes *Shockwave Rider*, *Stand on Zanzibar* and *The Sheep Look Up*, constantly emphasises his commitment to the health of the Earth and comments on human society. This **FEAR** story continues those themes by gently poking fun at our human (time-) tunnel-vision, our narrow point of view limited by time and understanding despite our so-called advanced sciences.

"He did not at once attain such enviable good fortune. He says in so many words: For a long time I lived on junk food"

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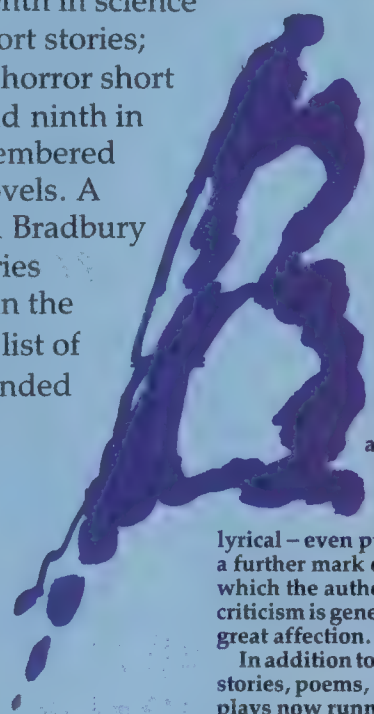
THE ILLUSTRATOR MAN

In a 1987 poll of more than 200 current practitioners in the field of fantastic fiction – including luminaries Stephen King, Orson Scott Card, Ramsey Campbell and Roger Zelazny – the work of Ray Bradbury scored as follows: first in fantasy novels; second in fantasy short fiction; fourth in favourite science fiction novels; joint seventh in science fiction short stories; eighth in horror short stories and ninth in best-remembered horror novels. A total of 31 Bradbury short stories featured in the resulting list of recommended reading.



Bradbury, now approaching 69, is that rarity among authors in that he is almost universally liked and admired, despite the occasional accusation of somewhat overly lyrical – even purple! – prose. It is a further mark of the esteem in which the author is held that such criticism is generally levelled with great affection.

In addition to an output of short stories, poems, novels, essays and plays now running at almost 500, Bradbury found time to form his own stage company, The Pandemonium Theatre Company, in 1964, which went on to produce some of his finest works. Three years later he wrote the libretto for a musical interpretation of his *Dandelion Wine* (scored by Billy Goldenberg) and, in 1969, another libretto for his cantata *Christus Apollo* (scored by Jerry Goldsmith). In 1974 he wrote *Madrigals for the Space Age*, with music by Lalo Schriffin. He is now at work with Jimmy Webb on lyrics for a new musical version of *Dandelion Wine*.

Bradbury has, in turn, inspired others to translate his ethos into a musical idiom – for example: Barclay James Harvest's *Medicine Man* (from . . . *And Other Short Stories* 1971) was a thinly disguised tribute to *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, and Tom Rapp recorded *The Rocket Man* (based on Bradbury's short story of the same name) for the 1970 Pearls Before Swine set, *The Use Of Ashes*.

Next spring will see the release by Grafton Books of Bradbury's new short story collection, *The Toynbee Convector*, already available in the US.

Here, in the first part of a rare UK interview, Ray Bradbury talks to Pete Crowther for FEAR and gives an insight into the man behind some of the genre's most enduring and endearing literature.

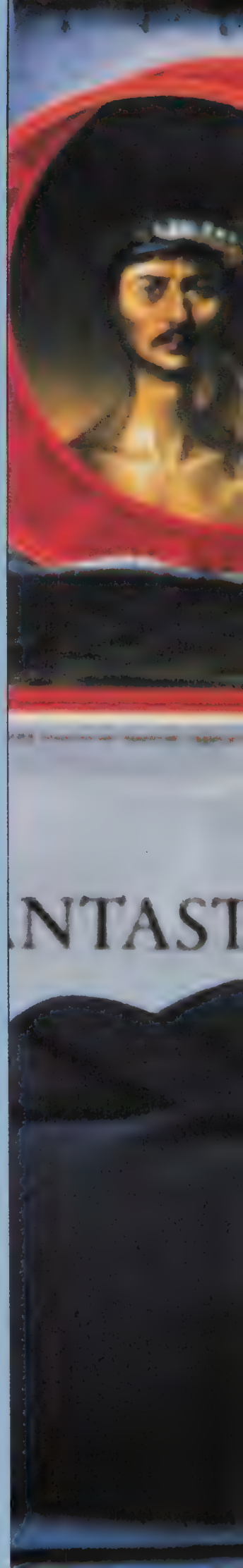
PC Let's go back to the early days of your childhood. Days to which you still seem to want to return . . . the old days of Green Town, Illinois, stories and the young Doug Spalding. What is it with all that?

RB There's been so many books published over the years of people's unhappy childhoods and I thought 'My goodness, I was spoiled'. I had a terrific childhood because I lived on the same block with my grandparents and my favourite aunts and uncles. I'd run from house to house, from my uncle's library, where I read Tarzan and all the Edgar Rice Burroughs books, and then over in my grandparents' house, where I read all the books like *Alice In Wonderland*.

And then there was the town itself; we were on a block only 200 yards from the countryside in any direction, through this ravine I loved to play in. So on my way to school I'd go through the ravine and have adventures and I'd come back home the same way. Those years up until the age of 13 were really wonderful – naturally, I'd go back to them.

> *Leaving the sidewalk, you walk along a trodden pebbled, weed-fringed path to the ravine's edge. Crickets, in loud full drumming chorus now, are shouting to quiver the dead. You follow obediently behind brave, fine, tall Mother who is defender of all the universe. You feel braveness because she goes before, and you hang back a a trifle for a moment, and then hurry on, too. Together, then, you approach, reach, and pause at the very edge of civilisation.*
> The Ravine 'The Night'

The ravine was in Waukeegan, northern Illinois, where the Bradbury family lived until, like many others during the Great Depression, they were forced west in search of



"I don't want to work on anything, I want to have fun"

Ray Bradbury, of course, no longer has any trouble selling stories . . .

'Oh no, that's not true. There are at least six stories in *The Toynbee Convector* that never sold. They were rejected by every major magazine, so I don't have it made yet. I don't know what's wrong with these people. I get the sort of rejection letters where people say 'God, this is a brilliant story, but . . . ' They all have fixed in their minds a certain kind of story. I mean, look at the *New Yorker*, how boring it's become in the last ten years. Who can read that fiction? Good gravy; it's terrible. And they've rejected 200 of my short stories during the last 30 years. I love the magazine. I would love to be in it, but I can't break through.

I love to tell these stories to other writers, because we all get discouraged at times and the fact is that editors, like other people, have blinders on; the problem with the world is that most people have blinders on . . . that's how I get all my work. I'm a consultant, on various city projects, and malls. I've helped to create various malls around the country, good ones, very stimulating ones, taking what I've learned of social life in London and Paris and Rome and putting those to work. But I find in all these fields people who are blind. I'm not better than the average architect or planner, I just see more widely and then I point out the obvious. I get my work all the time by being a master of the obvious.

work. Shortly before their upheaval, however, the young Bradbury began to practice what would one day be his trade.

RB I began to write short stories when I was twelve, when my parents gave me a toy typewriter. They knew I wanted to be a writer, so they bought me one of those dreadful little toy machines that have a circular series of rubber stamps on them and you have to turn the dial in order to print out words, and it takes you . . . oh my God, about an hour to do one paragraph. But I did it. And then when I began to take typing at school, when I was 13, that was terrific because when the teacher wasn't looking, I would write short stories in the typing class.

PC Families and child-parent relationships are often present in your stories. If we're to take a lot of your work as semi-autobiographical, then your parents do figure strongly.

> *There in shadows, hidden away from the wind, leaning against a wall, was a man, eyes shut, his hands crossed over his chest.*
> *I stared at him, wildly. I leaned insanely close to peer, to find.*
> *I did not know this man.*
> *He was old, old, very old.*
> *I must have groaned with fresh despair.*
> *For now the old man opened his trembling eyes.*
> *It was his eyes, looking at me, that made me shout:*
> *'Dad!'*
> The Wish 'Long After Midnight'

In *The Wish*, from the *Long After Midnight* collection, you actually resurrect your father and meet him at the gates of the graveyard to . . . well, just to talk? Was that story a cleansing exercise? It was very potent for me because it was around the time I lost my own father and it's something I've always thought about . . . what it must be like if you could bring your parents back, the conversations you would have. If you did bring your father back, what would you talk to him about, do you think? Would you even be able to talk?

RB Yeah. In fact I can't tell . . . when I lecture, if I tell the story of *The Wish*, I begin to cry. Then I have to stop. I can't tell the story.

I think we would talk. I would want to know who he was. The trouble with our parents is, that we know them as parents but we don't know them as human beings – which is something else again. What was my dad like when he was 14 years old? I know some of the things from his childhood, but what were his problems when he hit 18? Because you can never really sit down with your loved ones and say 'Hey, come on, level with me, what's missing from your life? Or has it been a good life?' We were a good family and we certainly got on well, so those I suppose are some of the things I would really like to talk about.

PC Your influences and your inspirations: you've mentioned Edgar Rice Burroughs, Tarzan, Alice . . . what about things like films, radio shows and TV and comics?

RB Oh yes. Buck Rogers, for example, the comic strip, began to appear in Waukeegan when I was nine. I went mad for Buck Rogers. I collected everything. All the Sunday colour pages, all the daily strips which I had put away, and when the collected works of Buck Rogers were published 14 years ago, Robert Dilly – son of John Dilly who created Buck Rogers – called me and asked me to write the introduction. So the nine-year-old in me jumped for joy.

My love of dinosaurs goes back to when I was five and I saw *The Lost World* in 1925 – that was a terrific film. And then *King Kong* came along when I was 13, and that was even better. All those wonderful dinosaurs, plus Kong.

THE TREK WEST

In 1933 the Great Depression was at its worst. Financial disasters sparked off by the Wall Street Crash piled up on the natural disasters of Mid-Western drought and farming techniques which led directly to the 'Dustbowl'. Thousands, out of work or forced to sell their land for next-to-nothing, took to the highways leading west, to the promised land of California. It was there that Bradbury was to make friends with the man who became his first literary agent, Julie Schwartz.

RB I was almost 14 years old when we travelled West on Highway 66 during the Great Depression, and of course everybody was out of work. My dad was looking for work out West and for many years after that he was in and out of work. When I graduated from High School we were on relief getting our food from the Government, so that's how poor we were. Julie Schwartz came into my life when I was 19 and went to the World Science Fiction Convention, the very first one, in New York City in July of 1939.

He became my agent when I was 21, sold my first story for me – to *Super Science* – and then he was my agent for about five years. When I began to move up into the quality magazines, he came to me and said 'Look, let's not kid ourselves. I don't know the quality market, I don't know the editors of *Colliers* or *Saturday Evening Post* or *Harpers* or *The Atlantic*, so you've got to go it on your own and find another agent'.

Luckily, when I was 27, I met Don Congon, in New York the prior year; he was editor of Simon and Shuster. And in the same month I got married, 1947, Don called me on the phone and said 'I'm going into the agency business, how would you like me to represent you?' And my response was 'How would you like to have a lifetime job?' And that's what it was. We've been together 41 years now and we've yet to have our first fight. He's a fabulous man and one of the greatest influences on my life.

GETTING RIPPED OFF

But before the 'qualities' recognised in Bradbury a talent to encourage, there were the 'pulps', most notably *Weird Tales*, who wanted something more direct than the aspiring young writer wanted to provide.

RB I didn't want to write the traditional ghost stories and I had fights with them all the time. Not bad fights, but arguments in which I would say 'Hey, let me go, let me take these things out of my mind, out of my secret self. Let me do ghost stories that are not ghost stories'. I guess I wanted to do psychological ghost stories, I suppose you'd say.

And of course I was not the first person to do that, Henry James and M.R. James were there a long time before, but you learn from the masters. They take from their own ganglions, their own psyches, their own bloodstream . . . these secret things that work . . . And *Weird Tales* finally gave in, they tried to reject a lot of things, then they said 'Well, well, it's a good story, we'll publish it anyway'.

PC Another good story is the way you found yourself involved with Bill Gaines and EC Comics . . .

RB They stole my work . . . and I caught them at it! I wrote them a very nice letter. I said to myself 'What would Jesus do in a case like this? Well, Jesus would turn the other cheek'. So I turned my other cheek and said 'Congratulations on that brilliant adaptation of my story. It's beautiful, I love you, etc etc. And incidentally, you haven't sent me my adaptation cheque'.

The next week, a cheque arrived from Bill Gaines. I wrote back, pretending they hadn't done anything criminal and said 'Hey, you know a lot of people are stealing my stuff these days, why don't you adapt it from here on and put my name on it, so we protect my copyright?' Well, they pretended they didn't know anything about anything and they made a contract with me, and during the next six or seven years they adapted at least 30 of my short stories.

PC But with magazines like the *Saturday Evening Post*, you were in an entirely different market. How did you get into that?

RB I broke into that with my dinosaur story called *The Foghorn*. That's one story that changed my life forever.

I met a young man named Ray Harryhausen when I was 17 and we were both in High School. He was building dinosaurs in his garage; so we became fast friends and we

still are. But my love of dinosaurs changed both of our lives because now he's known all over the world as the greatest animator of dinosaurs in films like *Clash of the Titans* and *Jason and the Argonauts*.

John Houston read *The Foghorn*, and he thought he smelled the ghost of Melville in it, called me in and gave me the job of writing the screenplay for *Moby Dick*. All as a result of that one story!

INTERPRETING THE MIRACLE

PC Earlier, in the context of Bill Gaines, you mentioned you considered what Jesus would have done: was that important to you at all? I mean do you have a kind of strict belief?

RB No, I have a very free-flowing open belief. We put Christ in a little box and put him on a shelf. About 18 years ago I wrote a cantata called *Christus Apollo*. You'll have read the text, I think: it's in my book *I Sing the Body Electric*.

> *We seek new Gardens there to know ourselves.*
> *We seek new Wilderness.*
> *And send us forth in wandering search.*
> *Apollo's missions move, and Christus seek,*
> *And wonder as we look among the stars*
> *Did He Know these?*
> Christus Apollo

But that text is, in a way, my view of the universe and how things would work if there were civilisations on other planets. Because as soon as you have a civilisation you have to have a religion, don't you? You have to. The word 'religion' simply means to relate yourself to the universe, to bind together the facts, to try and make sense of the miraculous.

I have a great sense of the miraculous and I try then to help rabis, ministers and priests to perform better. I mean, they're so boring most of the time, so I try to write short stories that are not boring, about these metaphors and just to say to people 'For God's sake, stand still at least ten minutes a day, look around at this fabulous thing that you are experiencing. You're only going to be here once, you're never coming back again and we don't know a damn thing about it'.

The religious try to help us interpret, the scientists are helping us to survive, but we're all doing the same work. I'm interpreting the miracle, they're trying to save us in the middle of the miracle. One group saves the mind, the other saves the body, and I'm trapped somewhere between trying to help all of us make sense of the miraculous gift of sight.

I'm just thinking about seeing. When you think of this world before creatures were born that could see, and then the eye is developed out of billions of years of experimentation and suddenly we are privileged to have eyes, and we forget to think about this: what is sight? what are these vibrations of light and life that come into our head? So all of this I try to make sense of and write poetry about and write plays about.

PC You say we're only going to come the once. Don't you think that there's something afterwards? As we've seen, you have written about resurrecting your father, meeting him again. What are your feelings on that?

RB Well, I have my children, of course, and my grandchildren, so there is an afterwards. My flesh is immortal in theirs. I guess we just have to accept that. I wish there was more, you know. If I thought there was a chance of being with my parents again and seeing them again, I would love that. But I very much doubt that's possible, even though a lot of other religions say differently. There is a part of me that is sensible, so I accept my immortality in my children and my grandchildren.

> *'I HAVE no name,' he whispered. 'A thousand fogs have visited my family plot. A thousand rains have drenched my tombstone. The chisel marks were erased by mist and water and sun. My name has vanished with the flowers and the grass and the marble dust.' He opened his eyes.*
> *'WHY are you doing this?' he said.*
> *'HELPING me?'*
> On The Orient North

RB Yeah. I got the idea travelling through France ten years ago – the French government brought my wife and myself over to celebrate Jules Verne's 150th anniversary. They gave us a limousine, a driver and a nice lady guide. And going through the south of France I mentioned the story about Kileshandra, the house, the bed and the whispering beams, and she said 'Oh of course, you realise we have no ghosts in Catholic Spain'. She was from Madrid.

And I said 'What?' She said 'Oh no, we have no ghosts in Catholic Spain'. She said 'We believe too much in our own religion, so that when you die, you either go straight to Heaven or straight to Hell and no messing around in between; which is what ghosts are'.

It was such a wonderful idea. I immediately wrote a poem called *There are no Ghosts in Catholic Spain* ... 'The Rain in Spain Falls on a Ghostless Plain'. And boy, how boring that is.

And I said 'Boy, you poor people, not having ghosts to think about'. We all love ghosts and we love the deliciousness of being frightened. So that idea grew the more I thought about it, I thought 'God, if they don't have ghosts in Spain, it may spread to other countries and the next thing you know, the remaining ghosts have got to get the hell out'. And that's when I put my ghost on the Orient Express.

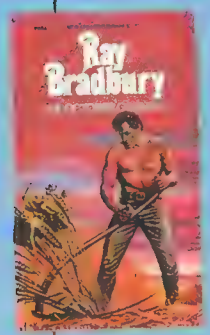
"You learn from the masters. They take from their own ganglions, their own psyches, their own bloodstream ... these secret things that work ..."

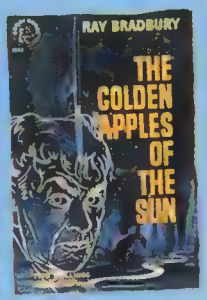
IT'S BEEN A JOY

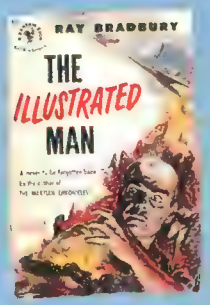
PC Apart from the poem or *Christus Apollo*, you've had *Messiah* – the Christ story from the *Martian Chronicles* – and *Have I Got a Chocolate Bar for You*. All a similar linked theme. Do you still get the ideas easily?

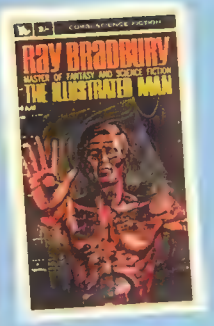
RB Oh, they come every day. There isn't a day passes I don't make a note. I get about 300 ideas a year and there isn't time to do them all, so I save them up and put them away. And sometimes I write a quick poem, because that's easy to do in five or six minutes, and then put it away because it's never quite finished. Then you come back later and polish it. But poetry is a great way to get an idea down and then later, it may turn into a short story.

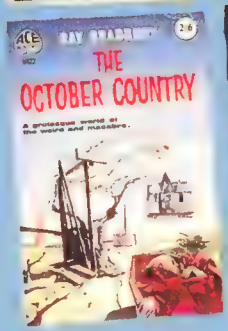
PC In the stories, you keep going back to certain ideas like the Uncle Einar type, the Green Town stories, the Mexican stories and the Irish and the Mars stories. Which are your favourites?

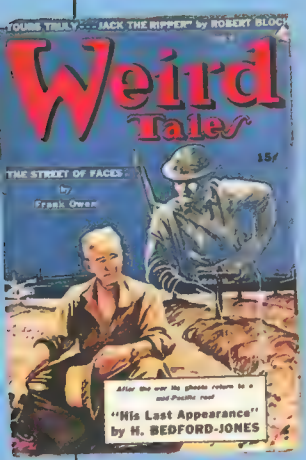


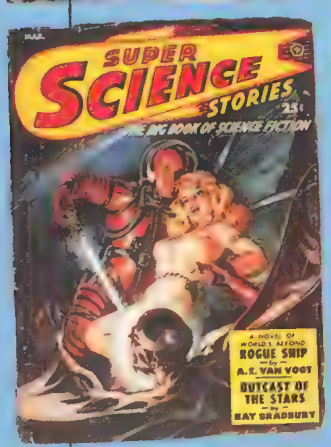












MESSRS SMITH AND FRIENDLY

PC The new novel you're working on is a sequel to your murder mystery, *Death is a Lonely Business*. That seemed like such a radical change for you. What exactly inspired you to write it?

RB Oh, because I lived in Venice, California for ten years, starting when I was 20. So I collected a lot of memories. I knew a lot of people. Most of the people in that novel were real people that I knew either in Venice or that I knew downtown in LA when I would commute down to the tenement there. Fannie Florianna and Blind Man Henry are real; and Crumley, the detective, was my swim and gymnasium coach in high school, and that's his real name. But he's no longer alive. I wish he were so that I could send him a copy of the book.

PC What about those two old men in *Death is a Lonely Business* – surely one of your most wonderful pieces of description – are they updates of Mr Smith and Mr Friendly from *The Day it Rained Forever*?

> *And if you listened, as the big iron trains rolled by, you could hear the rust flake off the old men's bones and snow through their bloodstreams to shimmer for a moment in their dying gaze as they settled for long hours between sentences and tried to recall the subject they had started on at noon and might finish at midnight, when the two brothers, bickering, shut up shop and went away snivelling to their bachelor beds.*
> Death is a Lonely Business

RB No. But that's a very interesting observation. Actually, I just saw an opera based on *The Day it Rained Forever* two nights ago here at pepperdine University. Beautiful little opera. It was in Edinburgh four weeks ago in the annual competition and did very well, got wonderful reviews.

But no, Friendly and the other characters are people I suppose that are a conglomeration of old men I've known. But the people in the waiting station for the train in my murder mystery are real people who sat there. Every day for years I'd go in to catch the train and they'd be sitting there on the same bench forever chewing tabacco and smoking and talking to the proprietor, and they never changed. They're there forever. And then all of a sudden, the trains went away, they pulled the trains out and put in the buses. And the little station had to close. I often thought it probably killed them, you know. They had nowhere to go after that.

RB They all are. I never do anything I don't love, so everything that I do is . . . is loving. I haven't worked a day in my life – I've done nothing but play since I was 12 years old.

I'll give you a good example. I have my own television series now on cable TV in England and France and here at home, and we've done 18 shows so far. We've shot four of them in London and up in Scotland and we've shot four in Paris and the rest have been done over in Toronto. They came to me a couple of months ago and they said 'We want 30 more'. I said 'No! No way! Listen, the way you're talking, you're going to turn it into work. If you turn this into work, I'm going to quit, I'll walk away'. I don't want to work on anything, I want to have fun.

I can do eight scripts, that'll be easy, you know, spread over four or five months, each is only about 25 pages long, so I said 'Get off my back, we've got plenty of time, we can do 30 scripts spread over five years. What's the hurry?'

And so I do everything that way. I write a short story . . . and I'm working on a new novel which is almost done. It's been a joy. I've galloped through, I've had fun. So that's the way I exist and everything I do then, to come back to your original question, whether it's an Irish story or my Mexican stories, it's all something either out of my past that I remember or an idea that's so good, like the ghosts in Catholic Spain . . . and I can't resist it.

Next issue: Ray Bradbury tells Pete Crowther about his latest work, comments on the films of his books, Walt Disney, John Huston, television shows and the dreadful boredom of New York writers.

On John Huston
The late John Huston was one of Hollywood's most innovative and powerful film directors, his *Moby Dick* a recognised classic masterpiece. The wayward film maker had a strong effect on Bradbury during their relationship on the filming of *Moby Dick*, and he has based the character of John Hampton in the story *The Banshee* (*Toynbee Convector*) on a thinly disguised John Huston. Was he really like that?

'All of that dialogue in *The Banshee* really happened. He was a strange man. He was always trying to get me to go out and find the Banshee and I always refused:

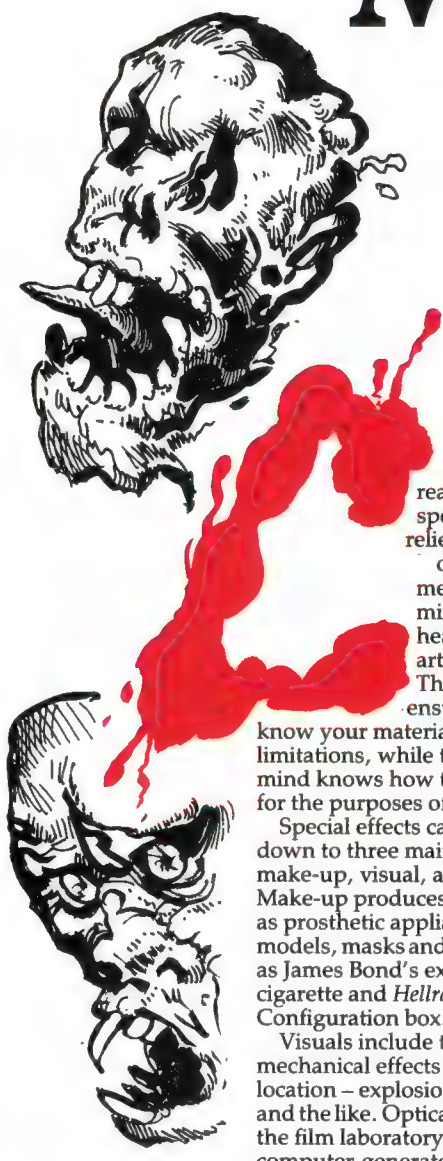
For the third time that night, the tone and colour of his mood changed. 'Hist!' he cried. Eyes squinted, he swayed in the middle of the room, like a dead man underwater. 'Doug, you hear?'

The wind trembled the house. A long fingernail scraped an attic pane. A mourning whisper of cloud washed the moon.

'Banshees.' John nodded, head bent, waiting. He glanced up, abruptly. 'Doug? Run out and see.'

Banshee
All the dialogue actually happened. That's the way Huston treated me. And it's only the ending that's my capper to the whole thing. My revenge.

MAKE THAT MONSTER CRAWL



Horror and fantasy films have come to rely less on acting ability and more on the special effects which back-up the humans on screen. In the fourth part of his series on movie-making, John Gilbert discovers that putting a monster together is just as much an art as playing to the camera.

Creation of a film's special effects relies on a recipe: one liberal measure of science mixed with a healthy dollop of art or invention. The science ensures that you know your materials and their limitations, while the inventive mind knows how to mould them for the purposes of the project.

Special effects can be whittled down to three main categories: make-up, visual, and optical. Make-up produces products such as prosthetic appliances for actors, models, masks and set props – such as James Bond's exploding cigarette and *Hellraiser*'s Lament Configuration box.

Visuals include the creation of mechanical effects on set or location – explosions, floods, fire and the like. Optical effects done in the film laboratory or with computer-generated graphics and, less often, in the camera with special lenses or filters.

High-budget productions like *Earthquake*, *Star Wars* and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* require numerous specialists in, and from, every field. But the vast increase in low-budget movies has created a need for jack-of-all-trade FX technicians who are just as at home setting up robotic devices as they are at applying latex rubber to actors. Small productions can, therefore, hire one company to deal with the lot, and an opticals company to provide specialist lenses and computer technology if necessary.

LIFE BLOOD

Latex rubber, gelatin and padding are commonest tools the make-up effects technicians use, but additives like corn flakes, soggy cardboard or watered down tomato sauce are as important to make SFX work, and on budget.

One of the most used techniques is one of the oldest: the moulding of prosthetic appliances to an actor's body, or the creation of artificial limbs which can be shot at, amputated or blown off. For that you need a human guinea pig. For arms or legs you can use anybody who's going spare, but when accurate representations of stars are needed, the actors are forced through the uncomfortable ingnominy of body casting; uncomfortable because the part of the body – or entire body if a skinless corpse as used in *Hellraiser* is required – is immersed in plaster to make the impression. One of two things can then be done with the resulting mould.

Fake limbs are made by pouring rubber into the mould. But if the prosthetic is to fit an actor – a monster face for instance – the life cast is covered in a thin layer of clay. New features are created in the clay and the whole is recast to produce a thin latex rubber mask. To complete the effect, paint and hair are added. On set the mask may be further treated with fresh blood or puss, and it may be discarded after one use because tight full-head masks tear easily.

Actors don't always need full masks, maybe simply ageing, some dental work or contact lenses. Ageing is often a matter of changing the face shape and the texture of the actor's skin. Jowels can be emphasised by padding and the lower lip can be protruded with a plastic bridge to emphasise the chin.

With skin texture rubber comes to the rescue again in a special form called Stretch Latex. It's applied to the actor's skin in a course, or stippled, layer. The effect, around cheeks, forehead, eyes and even lips, belies the technique's simplicity.

Prosthetics are often combined with other techniques to produce startlingly gory wound effects such as the slit throat and the gunshot wound. The throat is cast as a prosthetic appliance and contains a receptacle for the blood, probably at the back, connected to a tube fed by a hand pump so the FX technician can supply more fluid to the wound. When the throat's slit the blood spills out. The effect can be even more lurid if the actor moves his head, arm or leg to split the wound wide and allow more blood to gush out.

Some wounds are arterial requiring a strong squirt – as in *Nightmare on Elm Street* when Freddy cuts off his fingers. The same technique is used but the blood is concentrated using a powerful pump. The result is often censorable.

Gunshot wounds have an element of acceptable risk. Small, electronically detonated explosive devices, squibs, are taped around a blood bag and attached, with protective shielding, to the actor. The FX technician stands out of shot and fires the device which, if properly done, should break the blood bag and perhaps rip the actor's clothing.

MIGHTY MINIATURES

If you want to set fire to an historic building or have a disembodied hand walk across the floor, you're talking mechanics, miniatures, and animation.

Models which replace real

HOW TO MAKE A MOVIE: PART IV

buildings, people, or sets, can be as small as 15 to 20 inches but must have the detail to support camera scrutiny – and be big enough for the effects of flame or water to look realistic. Model makers work from photographs of the real thing and use a large range of everyday materials – balsa wood, polystyrene, flexible plastics, even cardboard – to create their facsimilies. It may not surprise you to learn that many spaceship exteriors are made Airfix kits, even the waste bits. They *will* use anything.

Character models, be they monsters or a small-scale versions of your leading human actors are used where it's impossible to substitute the real thing. Say, for instance, that your main character must be filmed hanging from the outside of a weaving spaceshuttle. Models of both actor and vessel are made and supported from wires or on stands and animated by stopframe – the technique where a technician makes minute adjustments to the models' positions for each frame of shot film. The result is combined with background footage, either live action, or animated on a rostrum camera. The model footage may then be intercut with footage of the actor hanging onto a scale version of part of the spacecraft which has been built in the studio.

Alternatively full-scale model monsters are built using the make-up artist's skills over a mechanical construct – pulleys, wheels, hydraulic jacks – which brings the beast to electronic life. Though hardly cheap, they have the advantage of being able to appear on set with actors – a good example is Jabba the Hutt in *Return of the Jedi*. Actors also have an easier time because there's something to react to. But the on-set approach is so expensive that certain effects can only be filmed once – and if they go wrong sequences may have to be cut.

FRAME BY FRAME

During post-production, laboratories process the film footage and add effects which could not possibly be done in the camera, either because of the danger or the budget. Even the simplest of effects, such as the dissolve from one scene to another or the frozen frame, are done in a lab using optical printers.

More complex effects, or 'opticals' as they're known, are possible: the printer can combine separate images on one piece of film – as with split-screen photography – and also add backgrounds to foregrounds by using what's known as the blue-screen technique. Split-screen has many uses, most notably that of combining two separate performances from one actor in the same scene – seen to great effect in Cronenberg's *Dead Ringers*.

The basic technique uses a camera mask similar to those used in matte work. One half of the scene is shot with the other side masked off. The mask is then swapped over and the actor does his second role from there. The two film images are combined and result in one actor talking to himself.

Technicians now use a technique similar to travelling matte, where the position, size and shape of the mask isn't restricted to one side of the screen. So actors can be duplicated several times, giving more freedom of movement.

In blue-screen, the foreground – actors or models – are photographed against a bright blue-lit backdrop (they don't wear any blue clothes!). During the optical process only blue is printed to make a black mask. A reverse mask then holds back the selected background footage, leaving the actors as black animated holes into which their accurately registered live action foreground shot can be matted (combined with the first black mask to stop the blue background printing through). This technique is great for space walk scenes.

You may be in favour of furry animated creatures rather than space-walking science-fiction. No problem, as the optical printer can provide combine live action with animation à la *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*. As the cartoon creatures are solid their animated antics can be combined with human action in the same way. It's as simple, and difficult, as that; difficult because the images have to be precisely matched; simple because most of the work is now done by computer.

TRAVELLING MATTES

Computers. Yes, you can't get away from them even in the movie world. Disney started it with *Tron* and since then advanced computer techniques have made the impossible more possible.

The simplest procedure, evident in *Tron*, is Computer Aided Design (CAD) animation. Often designers have an easy job, creating only the first and last frames of a sequence, the computer filling-in the frames between them.

Real-life images can be 'grabbed' – usually through a CCD video lens similar to your camcorder's – and digitised. In the computer they can be altered and re-animated to create fantasy effects. Unfortunately, such systems are expensive – memory is money – especially if the graphics contain lots of colour and polygons (the smallest acceptable flat plane which can be combined with billions of others to recreate a real scene). Few studios have such computers, but facilities like George Lucas's Industrial Light and Magic in California or Travelling Matte in the UK own machines with astounding abilities.

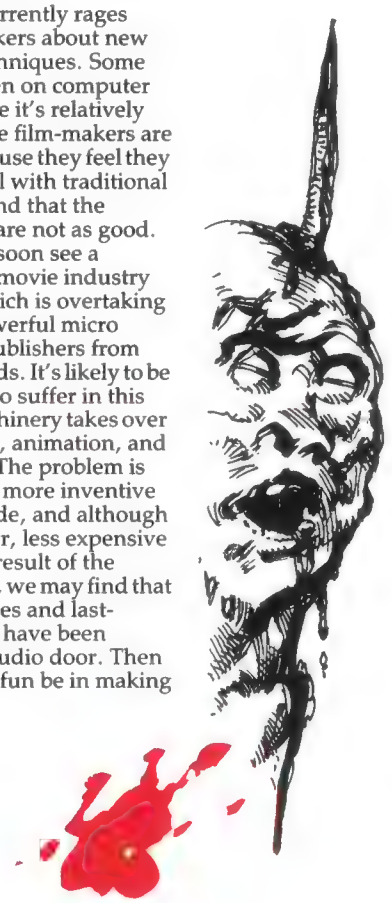
Travelling Matte produces the backgrounds and some of the monsters for ITV's *Knightmare*. The designer can create a new background or grab one from the real world, colour it, light it using coloured shading, and then project an actor into the scene.

Impressive is that Travelling Matte's computer can pick out and enlarge parts of a scene so that you can go in for a close-up of the actor without having to shoot real backgrounds. It also creates real prosthetic monster shapes and projects details of their clothing and features onto them.

The systems power lies in its ability to manipulate anything within its environment. You're only limited by your own imagination, computer memory and the video image resolution. At present the system's only effective on television, but a new development will soon be used for film work.

Controversy currently rages amongst film-makers about new computerised techniques. Some producers are keen on computer animation because it's relatively inexpensive: some film-makers are holding back because they feel they have more control with traditional SFX techniques and that the computer effects are not as good.

It's likely we'll soon see a revolution in the movie industry similar to that which is overtaking publishing as powerful micro computers free publishers from traditional methods. It's likely to be the FX people who suffer in this revolution as machinery takes over from glass mattes, animation, and prosthetic work. The problem is that FX teams are more inventive than the print trade, and although we may see slicker, less expensive effects work as a result of the technology boom, we may find that odd-ball techniques and last-minute ingenuity have been thrown out the studio door. Then where would the fun be in making movies?



Next Issue: Post Production – what do I do with all this film?

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BAD TASTE SHOCKER

In the first part of yet another fabulous FEAR column, John Glenday reveals movie secrets and titbits from around the world – most of which you won't find in any other magazine

Let's start with the long awaited *Batman* movie. At the San Diego comic convention, the Caped Crusader's creator, **Bob Kane**, was wheeled out to give his blessing to the project and, probably, to allay any jitters about the coasting of **Michael Keaton** as the crime fighter.

Along with Joker **Jack Nicholson**, also appearing are **Kim Basinger**, **Jerry Hall**, **Elton John** and **Billy Dee Williams**.

Charles MCowan – co-writer of *Brazil* – has gone over Sam Hamm's script, and, with luck, injected an element of *Brazil*-type humour to keep the story nice and dark. Meanwhile, Sam is working on a draught script for a movie based around the *Watchmen* comic series.

Ever onward, and the latest **Gale Ann Hurd** production, *Alien Nation*, is doing reasonable business in the States. We will see it in March '89. It's a buddy cop movie, in which one half of the partnership is a humanoid alien called Sam Francisco. **RS O'Bannon** scripted from his own story, whilst **James** – Mr Hurd – **Cameron** did his own rewrite – more humour?

Talking of Mr and Mrs Cameron brings me to their recent purchase of the rights to **Lucius Sheppard**'s novel *Life During Wartime*. It's a futuristic story set in the jungle battlegrounds of central America. The novel is prime material fore a Cameron-style action thriller.

PHANTOM FREDDY?

We all know that **William Gibson** has scripted **Walter Hill** and **David Giler**'s story for *Alien III*. All that's needed now is a director, and he will be **Renny Harlin**, who made *Elm Street III*.

Freddy Krueger's alter-ego, **Robert Englund**, is to star in a new *Phantom of the Opera* remake, produced by **Harry Alan Towers**. **John Hough**, of *Incubus* infamy, directs. Congrats on your recent marriage Mr Englund and see you in *Elm Street IV* which is, surprisingly, being considered for shooting next year. I'm not supposed to say too much, but several well known horror writers are busy putting the final touches to their storyline treatments. We'll tell you who wins the script contract, though, and probably before even the producer knows.

Yet more supernatural shenanigans, this time with **William Peter Blatty**, who's just finished a screen treatment for his novel *Legion*. The book's a sequel to *Exorcist* and follows the policeman from the first novel/film, Lt Kinderman, who runs into some familiar demons. The novel disregards the movie sequel – *The Heretic* – as did most of the world.

If you prefer spooks of a funnier kind ignore *Legion* and go for *Ghostbusters II: Last of the Ghostbusters*, which commenced filming on November 28 in New York and has the same director – **Ivan Reitman** – and the same stars in the form of **Bill Murray**, **Dan Aykroyd** and **Harold Ramis**, plus an Aykroyd/Ramis script. Sounds promising.

POT-BELLIED INVASION

Science-fiction and **Gary Kurtz** is back after a rocky few years playing with naff puppet movies. His new production, *Slipstream*, reunites him with a figure from *Star Wars* – **Mark Hamil**, who stars. Other actors on the team include **Bill Paxton** (*Near Dark*), **F. Murray Abraham** (*Amadeus*) and a strong UK contingent comprising **Bob Peck** (*Edge of Darkness*) *and* **Ben Kingsley** (*Gandhi*). This crowd is directed by **Steve Lisberger** (*Tron*) on a £15 million budget. Throw in a **Charles Pogue** (*Fly* and *Psycho III*) script and some **Brian Johnson** (*Aliens*) effects, and with luck you'll have an amazing movie.

Next up, here's *Bad Taste: The Movie*. A low-budget New Zealand film that's been making waves with its high splatter content, and should please **FEAR** fans when and if it appears in the UK – probably censored to death.

The story deals with a visitation of bumbling, pot-bellied aliens who hit town to stock up the larder for their fast food chain. During this intergalactic Big Mac attack they come up against a group of dissenting humans who are less than happy with the situation – after all, humans make the tastiest quarterpounders this side of the universe.

Expect loads of carnage. The director, **Peter Jackson**, got the characters to read *Soldier of Fortune* magazine to get the essence of fighting men, so that when they get around to blowing away the bad guys, they would look good.

And finally, it's in the public interest that we make this statement: that bastion of good and tasteful movies, **Cannon**, had on the cards for 1988 a definitive remake of the 1920 movie *The Golem*. A golem is an ancient statue (usually made from wood) brought back to life by mystical forces. Logic, of course, dictates a suitable actor should be found for such a demanding role. **Charles Bronson** was approached and, sadly, turned down the part, obviously tired of continual typecasting and wooden acting roles.

STOP PRESS: Remember John Carpenter's *The Thing*? SFX man **Rob Bottin** is trying to get *The Thing II* off the ground. I don't envy him the job.

Bill Murray: ready to bust a few more ghosts

DEAD RINGERS

Starring: **Jeremy Irons, Genevieve Bujold, Heidi Von Palleske, Barbara Gordon, Shirley Douglas, Stephen Lack.** *Producers* **David Cronenberg, Marc Boyman,** *Screenplay* **David Cronenberg and Norman Snider,** *Director* **David Cronenberg.** *Distributor* **Rank. Cert 18, 115 mins**

Dead Ringers: Genevieve Bujold and Jeremy Irons

You're going to read a lot of hyperbole about *Dead Ringers*, and so here's my sweeping statement: with this film, Cronenberg proves that, after Martin Scorsese, he is the best active film maker in the world.

The term Art Movie is as useful and dangerous as any other genre label, carrying with it associations of limited distribution and exclusive clique audiences, but it's as good as any way of describing precisely what the director is up to. And make no mistake, Cronenberg is going to have to be lumped in with the above-mentioned heavyweight names in the future rather than with such genre superstars as Dario Argento, Wes Craven and John Carpenter.

Joint venture: the Mantle twins

My only major quibble with this movie is the cheap and tacky title – there is a cheap and tacky 1964 Bette Davis twins movie called *Dead Ringer* – and generally less evocative than its original title, *Twins*. Otherwise, this is as near perfect a film as I've seen all year.

Based on a true-life *National Enquirer* headline ('Twin Docs Found Dead in Posh Pad') this film follows the lives of Beverly and Elliot Mantle, identical twins both played by Jeremy Irons, who develop a precocious interest in the problems of sex and the female anatomy and grow up to be a world-beating team of gynaecologists.

While the suave, outgoing Elliot is accepting awards and research fellowships, the retiring, more overtly neurotic Beverly is doing the graft and taking care of the patients. The Mantle twins live together in the latest of Cronenberg's tastefully designed hell-on-earth luxury apartments, and often replace each other at social functions. When Beverly takes a fancy to his latest patient, actress Claire Niveau (Bujold), it's Elliot who wines, dines and seduces her, paving the way for Beverly to move in and establish a relationship that takes him out of his shell but also exposes him to a set of emotional dangers that ultimately lead to disaster for all concerned.

The set-up could almost work for a sophisticated farce, but this isn't a comedy, it's an uncompromised and uncompromising film, which contains moments of horror and physicality far more shattering than the goriest special effects gimmick.

The home stretch is profoundly depressing, and yet deeply moving, as the twins come to resemble each other more and more in their degradation, the calculating Elliot following Beverly into drug addiction on the theory that only if the Mantle Brothers really become identical can the inadequate personalities separate from each other and get back to some kind of functioning normality.

With an unhappy outcome a foregone conclusion, it's astonishing that the film is as suspenseful as it is, and Jeremy Irons gives two of the subtlest, cleverest portrayals in recent cinema. The special effects are invisible, with Irons doing far more to create the illusion of duality than any optical splicing, and yet again Cronenberg demonstrates his knack for creating bewitchingly offbeat heroines. In an era of teenage bimbo movies, it's a pleasure to see Genevieve Bujold – who has lines on her face, bad teeth and is gorgeous – cast as a real-life woman (imagine the film recast with Rob Lowe and Demi Moore).

Also, note the way the people interact with the art direction, the care taken with the very few supporting characters and the credible, intelligent dialogue. All this has been in evidence in earlier Cronenberg films, but here he's curbed his fondness for wayward plots and dragging in stray ideas almost at random and come up with a controlled, disciplined movie that still has more content than any given year's worth of genre releases.

Too often genre pulications sneer at film-makers who achieve success with horror but then claim they want to move on, but notions of genre are inherently limiting in all forms of art, and Cronenberg is entirely justified in leaving behind the warmed-over science fiction elements of his earlier films and concentrating on the more intellectual, character-based mode he perfects here. He has always made movies like this, but here – for the first time – he's able to present the inhuman condition without recourse (one slightly too blatant dream sequence apart) to flesh-stretching special effects, borrowings from earlier horror films and the trappings of conventional melodrama.

This is not the work of someone trying for the commercial high ground (although it has been surprisingly successful in the American market), and it certainly isn't by any stretch of the imagination a mainstream movie. *Dead Ringers* isn't a horror film. It's a David Cronenberg film, and as of now that means something special.

Kim Newman

ALIEN NATION

Starring: **James Caan, Mandy Patinkin, Terence Stamp.** *Producers* **Gale Anne Hurd, Richard Kobritz,** *Screenplay* **Rockne O'Bannon,** *Director* **Graham Baker.** *Distributor* **Twentieth Century Fox. Cert 15**

Los Angeles, 1993. The aliens have landed. They are here, living among us. H.G. Wells's vision of *War of the Worlds* hasn't happened; the outcome is an intergalactic slant on the American Dream. In the land of the free the Newcomers, as the extraterrestrials are referred to, have rights, homes and live as we do.

James Caan plays Matt Sykes, a hard-bitten, hard-drinking, embittered cop. Divorced, seeking solace in a bottle, his life takes a further downturn when his partner is killed during a call to an armed robbery in Slagtown – slang for the Newcomer ghettos. Beaten and nearly killed by the alien criminals, Sykes is then assigned a new partner, Sam Francisco *(sic)*, the first Newcomer to make the grade of detective, and we're soon in familiar buddy-buddy cop territory.

Sykes doesn't like Sam, who isn't slow to realise why, thus putting in focus the heart of the story, such as it is, which deals in simple-minded fashion with racism (xenophobia?).

Although Caan is put onto another case he inevitably begins to dig into the reasons behind a

series of Newcomer murders and disappearances that seem connected to the incident in which his friend and colleague died. With the help of Sam, played warmly by Patinkin, who successfully manages to convey emotion through his latex Mr Potatohead alien makeup job, they infiltrate the Newcomer underworld. Here they run up against the highly successful alien businessman William Harcourt (Stamp) and his slimy sidekick Kipling (Kevyn Major Howard).

Behind Harcourt's urbane exterior is the ruthless mind of a drug dealer and his plan is to control the Newcomer community by addicting them to a powerful narcotic that was originally the only reward they were granted on the slave ship which was transporting them across the galaxy.

The worn-out plot is competently scripted by O'Bannon, a former story editor of the revived *Twilight Zone* series, but it's also predictable in true TV movie-of-the-week style. But that isn't the most irritating aspect of this mediocre picture, it's the way in which every interesting aspect of the Newcomers' lifestyle is just swept aside and not developed to any degree. Only small details like the fact they get drunk on sour milk and like eating raw beaver – please, no innuendos – are presented, usually for comic relief.

As a result any intelligent viewer will see the plot twists coming a mile off, even anticipating most of the gags. Producer Gale Anne Hurd went to great lengths to emphasise the theme of racism to me during an interview while the picture was in production, but sadly even this is dealt with in such a simple manner that a five-year-old could understand it.

Direction and photography are professional yet unimaginative, making *Alien Nation* slick, mindless entertainment of a low standard that won't even satisfy the demands of action fans.

Philip Nutman

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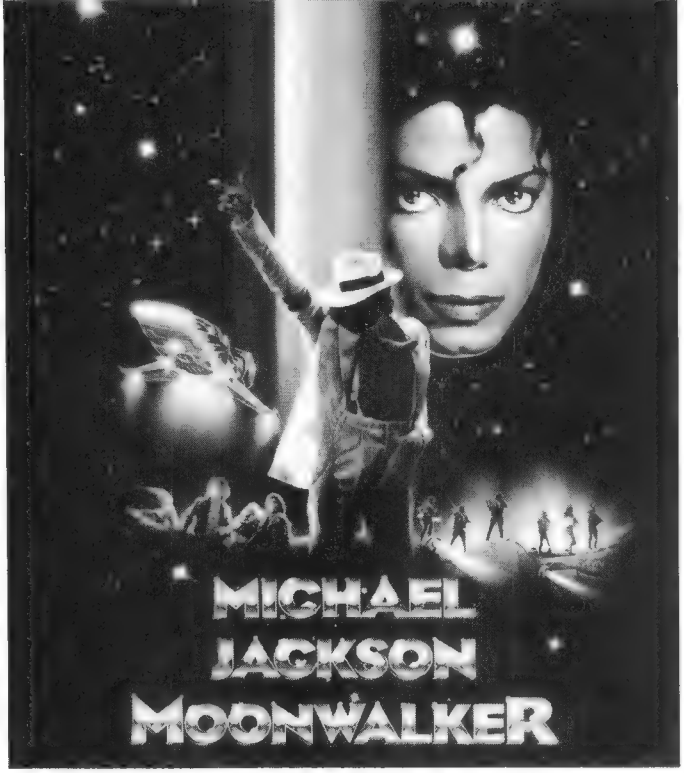

MOONWALKER

Starring: **Michael Jackson, Sean Lennon, Kellie Parker, Brandon Adamns, Joe Pesci.** *Producers* **Dennis E. Jones, Jerry Kramer,** *Screenplay* **David Newman,** *Directors* **Jerry Kramer, Colin Chilvers.** *Distributor* **Warner Brothers.**

A representative of Michael Jackson Limited stepped out at the front of the cinema and told us that this was the first showing of *Moonwalker* anywhere in the world. A high-pitched cheer of weenyboppers greeted this statement and so the scene was set for the Jacksonettes to squeal at his every mention and appearance on screen.

The movie started and a tapestry of videos unwound before us for about 30 minutes, all edited together in best pop-promo fashion until the song *Bad* sounded out.

The video had been reshot with all the principle dancers reduced to children. The overall effect was quite humorous and created the feeling that MJ is not afraid to take the piss out of himself.

Another video snippet was of Jackson singing *Leave me Alone* against a backdrop of all the newspaper headlines ever written about him, including references to Liz Taylor, hoses, chins and chimps. It came across as a dig at the sleaze that materialises around him, and the song is possibly the only way he can answer back with an air of dignity and professionalism.

So far into the movie nothing outrageously new is seen, but the situation soon changes. A chase commences after the *Bad* sequence, with Claymation

figures animated by Wil Vinton chasing Jackson. It culminates in a dance sequence between Jackson and a rabbit which can dance better than him (please send all hate mail to *The Sunday Sport* –ED).

Next we see MJ picking flowers with three kids – ah, sweetness and light – only to find an entrance to a drug baron's den . . . and the bad guy spots them. From here we enter another chase through a set that looks like it came out of the John Landis story in *The Twilight Zone* movie.

Eventually Jackson's cornered, but by a twist of fate, just as the bad guys open fire with their pulse rifles – as used in *Aliens* – he turns into a car and drives away. It looks better than it reads . . . (it would have to –ED).

Yet another dance sequence with the gangster erupts which soon rolls into another chase. This time, however, all the kids and MJ are caught (good!). Now cornered, Jackson takes drastic action to save the day, and with the help of some amazing special effects turns into a transformer and blows the bad guys to lots of little bits. The man-into-machine is the best sequence in a very odd movie, and the audience of Jacksonettes were gobsmacked into silence for once.

Alas the film is too indulgent for a general audience. The real movie starts too late into the running time and gets past the point of audience involvement because characters aren't given the time or space to develop.

Next time Michael Jackson should go all-out, make a straight movie, and not be content with a hotch-potch which ultimately is a show case for the FX work, which admittedly in this case, is of the highest standard.

John Glenday

Win the Signed Uncensored Shooting Script!

Yes, we've dialed up a copy of *the* script, specially signed by director **Robert Englund** and his alter-ego Freddy Krueger of *Nightmare on Elm Street* fame.

This Script is special! It's the original shooting draft. No cuts! No changes! It's the way Englund and crew originally envisaged the movie. And it could be yours.

But, for such a unique prize we're not going to ask you an obvious question about Robert's connection with Elm Street. Oh no. *976-Evil* features a young boy called Hoax who uses a dial-a-horrorscope service and finds hell at the other end of the line. The movie was going to be retitled *Horrorscope* because 976 may be the code for dial-up and listen services in the States, but it ain't in the UK. Just tell us **what exactly is the four-digit prefix for dial-up services in Britain?**.

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CHILD'S PLAY

Starring: **Catherine Hicks, Chris Sarandon, Alex Vincent, Brad Dourif.** *Producer* **David Kirschner,** *Screenplay* **Tom Holland, Don Mancini, John Lafia, from a story by Mancini,** *Director* **Tom Holland.** *Distributor* **Not confirmed. Cert TBA**

Child's Play is the latest excursion into the subgenre of the killer doll story. Of these the high tide marks are the Sir Michael Redgrave sequence of *Dead of Night*, the classic Ealing anthology, and *Prey*, the third story featured in the excellent TV movie *Trilogy of Terror* where Karen Black is attacked by a murderous African fetishist. With such fine material to live up to, this movie surprisingly scores a good batting average that rates it as one of the more consistently entertaining genre movies to appear this year.

Andy Barclay (Vincent) is a lonely six-year-old living with his divorced mother Karen (Hicks). Andy wants a playmate, a friend who will always be around; so for his birthday mum buys him Chucky a 'Good Guys' doll, the toy he desperately wants. Only this doll is now inhabited by the spirit of psychotic mass murderer Charles Lee Ray (Dourif) after he's killed in the strong, action-filled opening by Detective Mike Norris (Sarandon). A student of voodoo, Ray swears vengeance on the cop and the fun and games start in earnest.

Within hours of getting Chucky, Andy's life is thrown out of whack when the doll kills Maggie (Dinah Manoff), his babysitter. Although Andy tell his mother the doll's real name is Charles Lee Ray no one believes him, putting the kid's strange behaviour down to the trauma of the woman's death.

From there on in the film treads familiar ground, but director Tom Holland knows his horror movies and is sufficiently talented a storyteller to maximise the suspense and tension. He plays with the audience's expectations so that the film delivers a handful of shocks.

Some of the material is rather nasty – the babysitter's death is brutally wince-inducing, for example – yet some of it is totally hokey popcorn-brained in its execution – the mother's search for the pedlar who sold her the doll being a prime example of the screenwriters slumming it instead of moving the plot forward. Also, a couple of key scenes are undermined by seemingly unrealistic settings, and here I refer to the sequence where Andy is locked up in a kids' home that resembles some kind of Victorian mental asylum for the under tens. These, however, are minor irritations, and once Holland gets the ball rolling in the last half audiences aren't given much chance to catch their breaths.

As far as atmosphere is concerned, the film-makers put the Chicago locations to good use, a factor amplified by excellent sound effects and precise editing by Edward Warschilka and Roy E. Peterson, the key elements in giving this kind of flick the punchy qualities the material needs. The Chucky puppet, designed and built by Kevin Yagher, Freddy Kreuger's makeup man, is by turns absurdly weird and cutely creepy, though depending on your willingness to suspend disbelief it could induce more laughter than chills.

Not as good as *Fright Night*, his previous movie, but Tom Holland deserves a B+ on his report card for this one.

Philip Nutman

THE KISS

Starring: **Joanna Pacula, Meredith Salenger, Mimi Kuzyk, Nicholas Kilbertus.** *Producers* **Pen Densham, John Watson,** *Screenplay* **Stephen Volk, Tom Ropelewski from Stephen Volk's story,** *Director* **Pen Densham.** *Distributor* **Tri-Star. Cert 18**

Just when you thought it was safe to go kissing again . . . This movie rates as one of the most tedious pieces of stale genre fodder to appear this year. But having said that, it does possess a certain warped charm that blossoms into enjoyable over-the-top mayhem in the last half hour. Actually, the press notes are more entertaining than the bulk of this tired, tiring rehash of old ideas.

'For most relatives, a kiss is the sweetest show of affection, the one bond that holds the family together (oh, really?). For the Halloran family, *The Kiss* is a nightmare that threatens to rip them apart . . . '

And: '*The Kiss* is a stylish, more than, horror film that sneaks up underneath the picture-perfect side of American family life. Warm and compelling on the surface, the film propels suburbia through the other side of hell . . . '

Doesn't sound like the film I saw.

The story, as such, starts in the Belgian Congo in 1963. Hillary (Pamela Collyer) and Felice (Joanna Pacula), young sisters, are separated when Felice is sent away to a sanitorium for health reasons. The sisters don't see each other again, for as Felice is about to visit Hillary and her family in Canada, the latter is graphically killed in a flashy freak accident.

Daughter Amy (Meredith Salenger) and father, Jack (Nicholas Kilbertus), are naturally distraught. Then Felice turns up. Amy is by turns entranced and wary of her beautiful aunt who doesn't seem to be quite what she says she is. Hey, guess what? She isn't. Pacula is actually a life-draining vamp who worships an African death cult idol and needs to pass on the evil through her niece.

Pretty soon suburbia echoes to the sounds of African rituals and the stangulated screams of a cat demon Pacula keeps as a pet. People start dying under strange circumstances, no-one believes Amy that there's something weird about her aunt, particularly not the local priest, who's struggling with his own question of faith etc, etc.

The Kiss is a movie filled with genre clichés, bad dialogue ('I decided I have a teenager on my hands', and 'I'll go sort the bitch out') . . . in fact it's *The Omen* meets Hammer's *The Reptile*, a combination that has nothing new to offer.

Stylistically it's a bland film, aside from first-time director Pen Densham's obsession with aerial shots and lingering looks at household appliances; one that has no real atmosphere, very little tension and only halfhearted attempts at suspense. On the strength of the script it's easy to get the impression that writer Stephen Volk considers the genre in less-than-serious light – his script for Ken Russell's *Gothic* only worked if approached as high camp comedy – but we should give him the benefit of the doubt as the press notes underline the fact that director Densham had considerable input on the rewrites.

Once again a director with no understanding of what makes a horror movie work has taken a potentially interesting idea – different belief systems in conflict – and turned it into a popcorn cruncher aimed at the lowest common denominator.

Philip Nutman

THE SOFT OPTION

British censors are more considerate with movies than their American counterparts, but when it comes to video the US, with its Unrated category, provides more freedom. In the first of a regular Video Cuts column, David Cox examines the release schedule for the New Year period and warns where the scissors have been at work

Chances are, if you've followed the horror scene for a few years, that you've rented at least one Medusa video. The company's most recent success is **Guy Magar**'s *Retribution* – see last issue – but it has a number of releases ready for early 1989 which are all guaranteed to have you reaching for the rental fee.

William Lustig's *Manic Cop* will be a big theatrical release from Medusa, one that I urge you to support before it hits the video shelves. The violent thriller, written by **Larry Cohen**, is going out with a few seconds trimmed by the censors – look out for the cut in the shower scene – but don't let that put you off one of the most exciting low-budget genre releases in ages.

Medusa is also about to release *Cameron's Closet*, an **Armand Mastroianni**-directed version of **Gary Brander**'s novel. While you shouldn't judge a movie by its trailer, this low-budget horror film looks like it's got enough monsters, gore and brats in peril to be worth a look.

There's something nasty in *Cameron's Closet*

DARK HUMOUR

More killer clowns, not from outer space this time but from *Out of the Dark* in **Michael Schroeder**'s sleazy slasher movie centred around a phone-sex agency whose employees are being murdered by a clown-masked maniac. Sound familiar? The movie may just be another stalk 'n' slasher but it stunned me when I saw it at the Paris Fantasy Festival due to some of the most brutal scenes and scariest set-pieces. I'm obviously not alone as the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) has had its scissors working overtime to remove some of the more offensive scenes.

Aside from being visually superior to most horror movies of its kind, *Out of the Dark* features an all-star sleaze cast which includes **Divine** in his last screen role, **Tab Hunter**, **Karen Black**, **Tracy Walter** and **Paul Bartel**. There's no release date yet but, even with the censor cuts, it's highly recommended.

MGM/UA may have released the gentle comedy *Moonstruck* in October but they couldn't get further from that than with the launch of *Not of this Earth*, **Jim Wynorski**'s remake of Roger Corman's SF thriller about an alien scout sent to Earth from the planet Davanna to replenish his people's blood supply.

Wynorski's remake sticks closely to the original in all ways but one and it's that exception that makes the film an attention grabber. In the original the role of Nadine Storey, the nurse who gets mixed up in the alien's plot, is played by Beverley Garland while in the 1988 version she's played by **Traci Lords**, an actress who gained notoriety in the US for appearing in hard-core porno films while still under age.

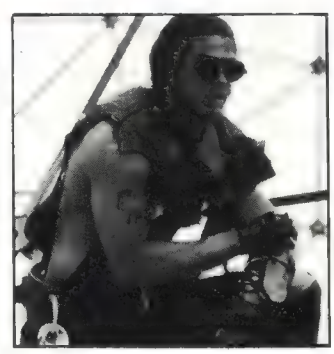
She's surprisingly good here, managing to attain a credible amount of camp acting ability, and it's her name that will send this movie into cult status. Lords aside, the film is unpretentious fun and manages to provide an effective parody of low-budget genre pictures at the same time.

OUT OF THE DESERT

CBS/Fox hasn't been kind to **FEAR** fans in the last half of 1988 with just *Maximum Overdrive* and *Nightflyers* on the video racks, but things are looking up. The company has already released **John McTiernan**'s *Predator* – see Fear Factor for an interview with the creature – and to follow that up it's about to release his startling debut *Nomads* for Christmas.

Nomads has been in limbo for almost two years, but it's an excellent thriller which manages to defy easy categorisation. It stars **Pierce Brosnan** as an anthropologist persecuted by 'nomads' – evil spirits in human form – and

Not of This Earth above, below: *Nomads*



Lesley Anne-Down as his nurse who learns his story through psychic flashes after being bitten by him.

If these movies whet your appetite for more of McTiernan's work just wait for February when you'll see one of the decade's best action movies, *Die hard*, which is McTiernan's third feature.

Finally, I know how impatient everyone is to see **Dario Argento**'s *Opera* but don't spend a fortune on one of the bootleg copies currently circulating around the UK. When *Opera* was released in Italy a 'soft' version was distributed and it's that print which is being touted by private dealers. Be patient, Orion Pictures has plans to release *Opera* soon and it's bound to be one movie worth waiting to see on the big screen.

PREDATOR

Starring: **Arnold Schwarzenegger, Carl Weather, Elpidia Carrillo, Bill Duke, Kevin Peter Hall.** *Producers* **Lawrence Gordon, Joel Silver, John Davis,** *Screenplay* **Jim Thomas, John Thomas,** *Director* **John McTiernan.** *Distributor* **CBS/Fox Video. Cert 18, 102 mins**

Arnie's come a long way since his days of pumping iron but now, as Major Dutch Schaefer, leader of a military unit put in to rescue allies captured by guerrillas in the Latin American jungle, he faces the ultimate warrior in the shape of an alien Predator.

The beast is possessed of incredible strength and speed and is capable of near-invisibility. It carries a vast range of weaponry, including a rocket launcher and several guns and tracks its victims using infra-red vision. Its prey is Schaefer's unit.

One by one his men are mown down, burnt beyond recognition or neatly filleted like fish on market day. The special effects team have certainly had a field day. That's not to say that *Predator* is an SFX movie. Arnie is one of the big screen's few musclemen who can speak *and* act. He pulls out his full repetoire for this fabulous movie.

The other star of the show is, of course, the Predator, played by Kevin Peter Hall – see interview page 81. Kevin isn't seen much during the first half but once on screen, he puts as much energy into the part as he did emotion in his other famed role as Harry in *Big Foot and the Hendersons*.

Not a movie for all the family, but *Predator* includes plenty of shocks, a lot of action and a little gore for those who can keep up with the pace.

Roger Kean

Hunted above, hunter below: Arnie's secret is revealed – it's the mud keeps him beautiful as he faces predatory Kevin Peter Hall

PHANTOM EMPIRE

Starring: **Ross Hagen, Jeffrey Combs, Sybil Danning.** *Producers* **Fred Olen Ray, Nick Marino, Tony Brewster,** *Screenplay* **T.L. Lankford, Fred Olen Ray,** *Director* **Fred Olen Ray.** *Distributor* **Vestron Video. Cert 15, 80 mins**

Fred Olen does just about everything in this easily forgetable production, except perhaps feeding the monsters. The Plot? A dappy private dick name Cort (Hagen) and his hard-as-bricks assistant lend a hand in locating the legendary land of R'Lyia by rich bitch Denea (Susan Stokely).

They're joined by a whimpish professor and brave and handsome research grad (Combs) from the Miskatonic University. Attacked in underground caverns by a band of cannibals, they're captured by alien queen Sybil Danning who has more on her mind than just Comb's body. She wants to escape Earth's atmosphere and nothing will stand in her way – not even a rubbery T-Rex.

Good camp fun for all and very little violence, unless you count the plastic head amputation at the beginning of this weeny-budget pic.

John Gilbert

INTRUDER

They're closing Walnut Lake supermarket and it's not just the prices that are being slashed! Yep, we're in stalk 'n' slash territory once more with this tale of a mad killer haunting the deserted aisles of a late-night grocery store.

Intruder offers the audience only one specially reduced red herring – could the killer be Craig, the bailed, jilted, lover of checkout girl Jennifer? Craig once killed someone with a blender, but you'd need an IQ of a discounted can of baked beans to fall for that old line. The revelation of the killer is hardly surprising but that doesn't reduce *Intruder*'s enjoyment value one bit.

The movie's ace in the hole is

HOLLYWOOD HOOKERS

Starring: **Gunnar Hansen, Linnea Quigley, Jay Richardson, Michelle McLellan.** *Producer/Screenplay/Director* **Fred Olen Ray.** *Distributor* **Colourbox. Cert 18, 89mins**

C-H-A-I-N-S-A-W. Chainsaw. The word may have gone AWOL from the title but they sure can't drop it from the movie. Fred Olen Ray's latest excursion into the sublimely trashy comes with a warning we'd all be wise to heed: 'The makers of this motion picture advise strongly against anyone attempting to perform these stunts at home. Especially if you are naked and about to engage in strenuous sex'. So, now we've got that clear, let's begin.

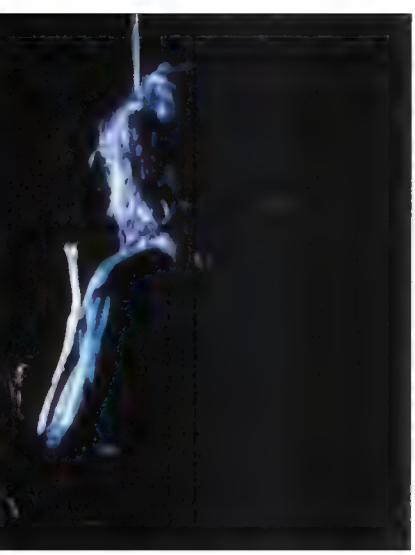
A chainsmoking, squeaky-voiced, peroxide tart jawing about doing 'it' before chainsawing a cop to death in the first two precredit minutes bodes well for the rest of Olen Ray's affectionate tribute to long, phallic instruments that go buzz in the night. And he doesn't disappoint.

Jay Richardson plays Jack Chandler, a cocky sleazoid of a private dick who's hired to find teenage runaway Samantha (Quigley), beds her – and why not? – and ends up embroiled in the cleave-'em 'n' leave-'em antics of a cult of insidious chainsaw worshippers led buy the great buzz king himself, Gunnar 'Leatherface' Hansen.

It's low on production values, high on humour. The script, credited to one Dr S. Carver, but dramatically rewritten and improved upon by Olen Ray, is awash with gloriously unsubtle innuendo and lines of sheer sparkling wit, while the requisite ingredients of blood, breasts and grisly bits are presented in copious dollops. There's much to enjoy: Linnea's bod, the virgin dance of the double chainsaws, and hooker Mercedes commiting coutrageous and unspeakable acts to the strains of Elvis. It's one hell of a piss-take!

Mark Salisbury

Starring: **Elizabeth Cox, Renee Estevez, Danny Hicks, David Byrnes, Sam Raimi.** *Producer* **Lawrence Bender,** *Screenplay/Director* **Scott Spiegel.** *Distributor* **Colourbox. Cert TBA**



Sam Raimi who plays one of the doomed supermarket workers. His performance, and a cameo from Bruce Campbell as an over-zealous cop, is one of the main reasons why **FEAR** fans will be forking out the rental fee. Sam ends up on the wrong end of a meathook – I don't really think there's a right end.

Intruders is brilliant, unpretentious psycho-killer fun – well worth a look at if you're getting nostalgic for those slash-happy days of the early Eighties when real men carried big knives! And if you're not – well, just rent it to see a guy get beaten to the floor with a severed head.

David Cox

KADAICHA: THE DEATH STONE

Starring: **Zoe Carides, Tom Jennings, Eric Oldfield.** *Producers* **Lynn Barker, David Hannay, Charles Hanna, Tom Broadbridge,** *Screenplay* **Ian Coughlan,** *Director* **James Bogle.** *Distributor* **Medusa. Cert 18, 86 mins**

Now familiar film territory, we're in the Australian outback of the aborigines, wondering about their past and what little exists of their present. As ever, the tribes are being abused, this time by an unscrupulous property developer who wants their sacred land. Unfortunately it's a group of local teenagers who fall victim to the ancestors' wrath in the form of the Kadaicha, ancient aborigine death stones whose ancient curse extends to all those who possess them.

The teenagers each have a weird dream of an eerie cave decorated by crude rock paintings. They wake up to find Kadaicha stones lying next to them and, one by one, fall victim to the death curse.

Despite the movie's low budget, *Kadaicha* is an original supernatural story which turns, to some degree, to real-life legends for its substance. The acting is slightly OTT and the make-up unrealistic, but the atmosphere garners dread rather than the campy fun of many recent horror movies – such as the dreaded *Zombie Brigade* and *Nightmare Vacation II*. It's good to see an Australian horror flick which takes itself seriously and doesn't for one instant get you thinking of neighbours – well, perhaps just one.

THROUGH THE FIRE

Starring: **Tamara Hext, Tom Campitelli, Randy Strickland.** *Producer* **Charles C. Cunningham,** *Screenplay* **G.D. Marcum, Brad Potter,** *Director* **Gary Marcum.** *Distributor* **Castle Home Video. Cert 18, 90 mins**

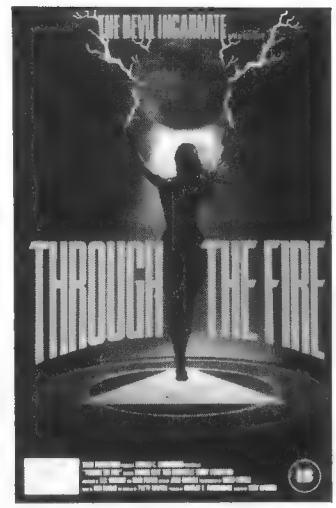
Ouija boards have always been cast as evil both in horror fiction and by the popular press. It is, therefore, not surprising that the board, through which you can communicate with the dead, should be a focus of horror films.

This is another teen movie with large helpings of sex and violence which starts to a brew when a ouija party gets out of hand. Our hapless group of teenagers not only unleashes something that's very dead, it also calls up something that's very demonic – quite by accident.

Once the beast is out of the box, so to speak, it's up to the invokers to get it back to hell, which is not such an easy task because it gets upset with anyone who interferes with its search for a sacred medallion destined to prolong its life on Earth.

Through the Fire has a predictable enough storyline, but is well shot, with a smattering of restrained special effects and well-timed shocks. Though it's not one of the most marvellous low-budget horror movies I've seen this year, the director makes good use of what little storyline is available, the acting's entertaining – if not of star quality – though I won't say that this movie is scary enough to put you off ouija boards.

Matthew Price



CHRISTOPHER LEE

invites you to win

THE MASK OF MURDER

FEAR competition

Christopher Lee's latest spine-chiller is about to be launched on video by **Sheer Entertainment**. **FEAR** has ten copies of this frightening thriller to give away!

The master of suspense has doffed his his famous Dracula cape to take on the role of a small-town detective on the trail of a masked lady killer. The killer is tracked down and shot dead at a stakeout, but soon a copycat is at work, cutting the throats of the town's ladyfolk.

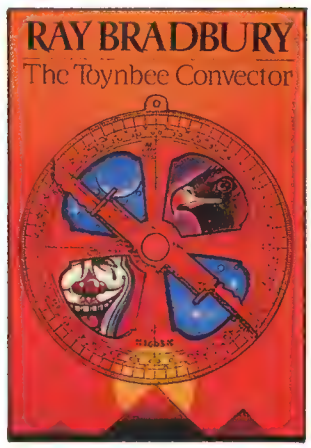
Only one man can be responsible. Someone who knows about the murderer's traits. Someone who is quite possibly a member of the police force. Someone who must be tracked down before the next grisly murder takes place . . .

You too can join Christopher Lee on the trail of this masked madman by telling us **the name of the last Dracula film in which he starred** and **who played Van Helsing to his Count**. Jot your answers on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope together with your name and address, and the video format you require – VHS or Beta. Send it to: **MASK COMPETITION, FEAR, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB**.

All entries should be in by January 15 and no members of Newsfield, **FEAR**, or Sheer Entertainment may take part in the competition.

THE TOYNBEE CONVECTOR

Ray Bradbury
Publisher **Alfred A. Knopf,**
Format **Hardback, £17.95**
Category **Fantasy/ mainstrem**



In the final story of this collection of 23, Bradbury bundles up his childlike awe of signals of mortality, both commonplace and exotic, which has been a driving force in him for more than 40 years of marvellous short fiction, in the appropriately grotesque body of a fake Egyptian mummy.

The wide-eyed boy to whom the mummy vouchsafes its whispery message decides that: (a) he will live life to the full, and (b) he will become 'the greatest writer that ever lived'. The story is called *Colonel Stonesteel's Genuine Home-made Truly Egyptian Mummy*, and it's a fine example of its author's most obvious strengths and weaknesses. The latter are evident in a slight and improbable plot, protagonists who talk and think exclusively in the gosh-this-is-all-such-fun! mode of children's television presenters, and a relentless bonhomie which, set to music, would make 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' sound like 'Anarchy in the UK'. The former: somehow, it works.

The Toynbee Convector is a compilation of Bradbury's fiction from various sources since 1980's definitive *The Stories of Ray Bradbury*, so it's not surprising to find all flavours of Bradbury here: Mars, Green Town and the October Country are all revisited, although none of them in stories which quite measure up to the earlier works that immortalised those locales.

About a third of the collection can be categorised as 'dark fantasy' and as expected the best stories are to be found in this area: *Banshee*, which cuts dramatically to the raw grief and vengefulness at the heart of its hackneyed folk-tale subject matter; *A Touch of Petulance*, whose time travel scenario conveys the remorselessness of fate better than anything else I've read; and *At Midnight, in the Month of June*, where a psychopath's menacing game of hide-and-seek is brought to life with chilling and disarming intimacy of viewpoint.

The majority of the remainder contain no elements of the fantastic other than their author's sublimely effervescent prose, which can make the most mundane events appear extraordinary, and the magic of basic human emotions expressed simply yet with the seemingly inexhaustible poignancy and sensuousness which is Bradbury's trademark. Here in undiluted form is that which breathes life into the 'bits of stuffed owl and bent lizard tail and old nicotine bandages' with which fantasy's ancient/brand-new mummy-body is constructed, and makes it speak to us.

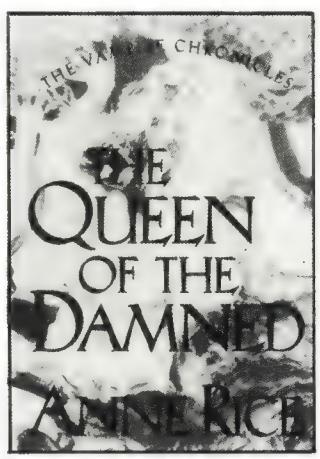
A preoccupation with the theme of growing up and growing old and the consequent dramas of loss and redemption which characterise human experience has often made nostalgia and sentimentality a mainstay of Bradbury's fiction. And given the tendency of many great artists to go soft in their later lears, I had feared this collection would be positively gelatinous. That is not the case.

There *is* a sense of the lightweight in some of its content, and newcomers to the author would still best be referred to the *Stories of . . .* for a proper introduction to one of the most influential fantasy writers of this century. But the converted can approach *The Toynbee Convector* with confidence. On its own it doesn't quite live up to Colonel Stonestee's mummy, which tells its young listener 'Everything. Just everthing. Everything I always wanted to *hear*' – but it's a worthy addition to a body of work which perhaps comes closer than any other living writer's to doing exactly that.

Simon McCulloch

THE QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

Anne Rice
Publisher **Alfred A. Knopf,**
Format **Hardback**
Category **Horror**



Lose sleep no longer! The legions of fans who have followed this author's Vampire Chronicles are not going to be disappointed with the third episode in the series.

Anne Rice began this bestselling series in 1976 with *Interview With a Vampire*, followed in 1985 by *The Vampire Lestat*. In these first-person narratives, we're taken into the world of Lestat, a tragic figure in the most Romantic sense, who has seen the history of the world through blood-coloured glasses. The second volume ended, somewhat abruptly, with Lestat becoming a rock star.

Now, in the current installment of what the author promises to be a continuing series, Rice shifts her narrative perspective from first- to third-person. The reader loses a great deal of intimacy generated by the autobiographical stance of the first two books. Even so, Rice is freed to expand her vision, allowing the reader to see an entire world-view through the eyes of the damned creatures known as vampires. The fascinating history of all the vampires, not just Lestat, can at last be related in a trio of deftly interwoven plotlines.

The book's title character is Akasha, the mother of vampires, who Lestat helps reawaken from her 6,000-year sleep to again bring havoc upon the world. Her power is deadlier than the ability of drinking blood, as she can also set people on fire merely by staring at them. Rice is at the height of her descriptive powers in this novel, ranging back and forth in time and geography, bringing to full strength her personal vision of a world increasingly populated by the undead.

She's a writer of considerable style, which is the key to the book's effectiveness. You simply forget that vampires couldn't exist. Rice then sweeps you along into her well-paced, action-filled narrative. Beyond Rice's ability to present an erotic undertone in her writing, she also never holds back on the sheer carnage and violence which has become the staple of this sub-genre since *Varney the Vampire* and *Dracula*.

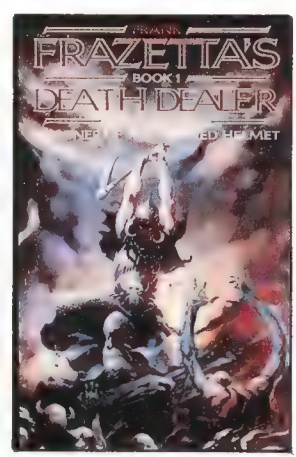
Rice is aware that contemporary readers expect a liberal dose of sex and violence in their horror novels, yet it's a tribute to her talent that she doesn't shame her literary predecessors. In many ways she remains respectfully faithful to the equally eternal visions of the 19th century writers of vampire tales of Europe and America.

The Vampire Chronicles has such a large cult following it probably wouldn't matter if every critic and reviewer panned *The Queen of the Damned*. But, as I stated at the outset: don't worry about losing sleep. This is one vampire novel well worth the risk after you've taken it into your bed.

Stanley Wiater

FRANK FRAZETTA'S DEATH DEALER: PRISONER OF THE HORNED HELMET

Take a well known fantasy artist, get him to create a Conanesque hero, get other people to write novels about this barbarian but



put your VIP's name on the front cover, which of course is of his own design. That's the formula for this series of **Frank Frazetta** presents novels (Grafton, paperback, £2.99) and the

packaging, if not the story inside, is attractive enough.

Unfortunately, there's nothing appealing about yet more adventures in a time before Atlantis rose (did it?) where sorcery and violence ruled the land. Nor does the reader care for the story of Gath of Baal who fights to save a group of gentle people from a ravening horde. Gath eventually becomes the hero of the novels, prisoner of an enchanted helmet and Death incarnate for his enemies.

The first book is written competently enough by **James Silke**, who's made a purse out of a sow's ear, but you're likely to get more adventure out of a Dungeons and Dragons game module than with this attempt to create another bludgeoning biceps hero.

ABANDONATI

Gary Kilworth is not the easiest of writers to read, according to some of our loyal **FEAR** readership. His prose is sharp, his style is deeper but brighter and more revealing than many of his fellow fantasists and he seems to care for the subjects about which he writes.

That should not provide an excuse for those of you who prefer a lighter read for missing his work. His new novel, *Abandonati* (Unwin Hyman, hardback, £12.95), shows that the best fantasy often comes out of hardy reality. It begins when Guppy, a small derelict fish in a big pond, wakes up to discover that the rich and their possessions have vanished.

He decides to go in search of them and his journey amongst

fellow down-and-outs against a pitiful background of decay is a quest with staggering social implications. You quickly realise that the rich have left him and his fellows to get on with their drab lives, that they have the power to change things but would rather ignore their social responsibilities and contracts, build walls rather than bridges to keep the bottom end of reality out.

Abandonati addresses social issues but is not, overtly, a leftwing tract. It's a story with message: which you can choose to ignore even when reading the book. But, if you choose such ignorance you're not only missing the point of a witty, though often despairing story, but also, in a passive way, reinforcing society's own goals. Funny at times. Tragic. Multi-layered. Brilliant.

TO SAIL BEYOND THE SUNSET

Robert A. Heinlein used to be referred to as the 'Dean of science fiction', but on the cover of this, his last posthumous novel (Sphere, paperback £3.99), he's become 'one of science fiction's most celebrated canons' – is that promotion or relegation?

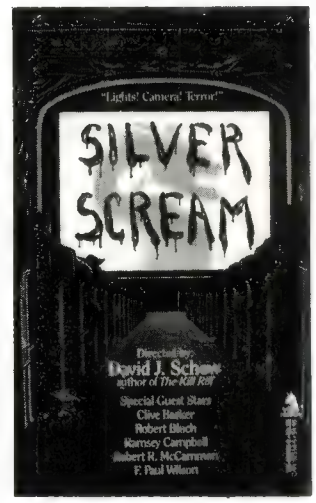
It really should be the latter. Heinlein was at the height of his powers with the mixture of quasi-religious awe, homespun frontiersman theorising and rattling good tale in *Stranger in a Strange Land*. Since then, through books like *Methuselah's Children*, *Time Enough for Love*, and most especially *The Number of the Beast*, the stories have declined in holding power at the expense of Heinlein's unhealthy preoccupation with incest, four hundred-year-old slinky vamps who could out-cornpone a Southern Congressman and overtly convenient parallel universes.

In *To Sail Beyond the Sunset*, many old names crop up directly or in passing – so much so that the publishers have provided a long reference list of people and related books to help the bewildered reader. Maureen Johnson Smith Long (she married Lazarus Long sometime when) stars, for this is the story of her lives and loves ('Being the Memoirs of a Somewhat Irregular Lady') from her birth in 1882 to some time appallingly in the future.

The rambling tale, spiced with explicit sex and taboo innuendo fails to ignite, making a sadly unfitting sunset to the Dean's long career. How one longs for the uncluttered innocence of Podkayne.

SILVER SCREAM

David J. Schow
Publisher **Dark Harvest,**
Format **Hardback, £19.95**
Category **Horror**



Silver Scream opens with an entertaining introduction by director Tobe Hooper penned in screenplay form, and provides a tempting glimpse of the technicolor shadows to come. It is certainly one of the most enjoyable introductions I've read in years.

Of the 21 stories in the book seven are reprints: Robert Bloch's classic *The Movie People*, Clive Barker's *Son of Celluloid*, Karl Edward Wagner's *More Sinned Against*, Jay Sheckley's *Bargain Cinema*, Richard Christian Matheson's *Hell*, Doug Winter's excellent *Splatter: a Cautionary Tale*, and Ramsey Campbell's *The Show Must Go On*. Even if you've read these before, all are worth the price of readmission.

First to unspool in this filmic festival of nightmares is John M. Ford's vertiginous *Preflash*, which tells of movie director Griffin's accidental ability to 'see' the impending deaths of those around him who will die by violent means. In one sense familiar territory, yet the author follows his imagination into unexpected areas. Though Ford's style is terse and sharply focused, it's a complex story to delight some and confound others as it demands a great deal of work on the part of the reader.

Following this bravura opening reel, *Cuts*, by F. Paul Wilson, demands little of the reader and is the first of three voodoo stories. The others are *Lifecast*, by Craig Spector, and Wagner's *More Sinned Against* – the best of the trio – all of which use the Haitian religion as the revenge motif device.

Wilson and Spector use theirs in predictable fashion: movie producer rips off or artistically violates the work/life of a novelist/special make-up effects artist, respectively, and suffers hideously as a result. Wilson goes for the groin. Spector, however, heads in the other direction with tongue teasingly in cheek as he satirises the pitfalls of low-budget pictures.

What sets Wagner's story apart is his ability to characterise hope, heartbreak and redemption in Hollywood, and by using the voodoo aspect in an off-the-cuff manner. His prose brings to life the underbelly of the Beast That Is Hollywood with an emotional honesty which makes for distressing reading. It's the familiar scenario of the small-town starlet used and abused by the system, here manifest in the form of her lover, reminding us life can be more horrifying than any number of supernatural entities, especially where self-deception is concerned.

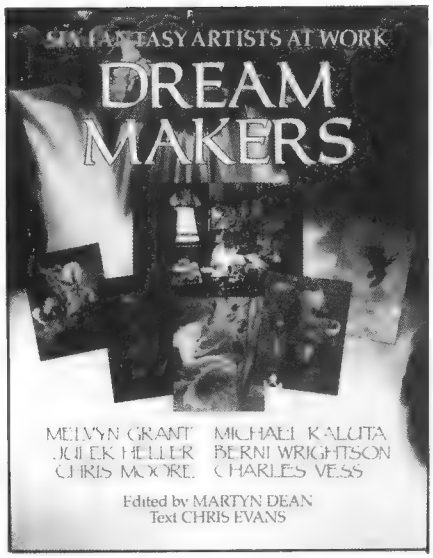
Sinema by Ray Garton is the best piece of fiction he has yet produced. Garton's written three novels to date, all of which have turned out to be competent, if rather lacklustre books, but there's a definite sense of growth in his writing and *Sinema* indicates his ability to develop characterisation is maturing

Steven R. Boyett's *The Answer Tree* is one of the most impressive pieces in this collection. Boyett, like Garton, is another young writer who promises much in the future, only he's streets ahead of Garton. Both writers' tales deal with the context in which we view films and how those contexts can influence not only our perceptions and behaviour, but that films aren't the cause of aberrant behaviour only a symptom of a wider problem, be it social or psychological.

Chet Williamson, who has proved to be an adept at novels and short stories, contributes *Return of the Neon Fireball*, a tale which seems more suited to *Twilight Zone* magazine than an out-and-out horror anthology.

The two tales which leave the biggest impression are Mick Garris's *A Life in the Cinema* and Mark Arnold's *Pilgrims to the Cathedral*. Garris delivers one of the best ever inside views of the Hollywood nightmare. It's also the most disgusting story in the anthology. Arnold has written an apocalyptic novella which pits sleazoid cinema against the massed might of the Moral Majority and rampant property developers. By turns wonderfully overwrought and street-wise in its exploitation poetry, it is a fitting conclusion to a meaty collection.

Philip Nutman



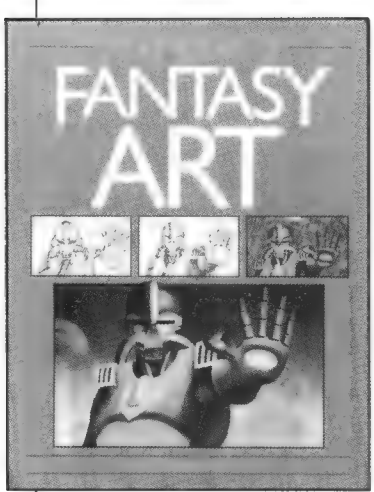
TWO BRUSHES WITH FANTASY

Publisher **Paper Tiger** have a good reputation for their range of glossy picture books on fantasy artists. Their latest release *Dream Makers* (hardback, £14.95) collects the thoughts and art of six creators, ranging from the perhaps lesser known **Charles Vess** and **Julek Heller** to the more recognised **Chris Moore**, **Melvyn Grant**, **Michael Kaluta** and **Berni Wrightson**.

Uneasy partners in a collection, it was perhaps felt they would not warrant individual books to themselves, so they've been assembled under the umbrella heading of 'Six Fantasy Artists at Work'.

As usual with books of this kind the text smacks a little of just being the necessary excuse for the illustrations, telling the reader little of how the people work and only superficially about their thoughts. In this instance the actual quantity of pictures is below par for Paper Tiger given the asking price.

Still, avid fans of this artform probably won't quibble, and certainly the book is worth having for Berni Wrightson's intricately atmospheric line drawings for Frankenstein. In the meantime, look forward to the imminent second collection of art from Tim White, *Chiaroscuro* – a definite must.



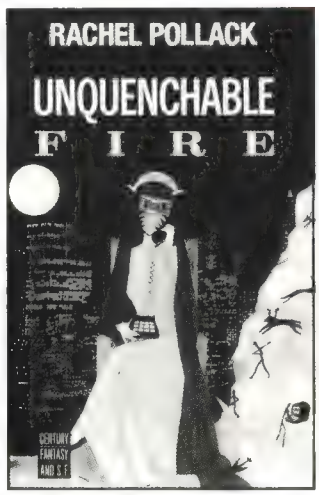
■ From admiring artwork to creating it with **Bruce Robertson**'s *Techniques of Fantasy Art* (Macdonald Orbis, hardback £11.95). Aimed at the amateur, it sets out to develop the budding artist's skills by covering such topics as Getting Ideas, Sources of Fantasy, Developing Ideas and Techniques and Tips.

While being mildly interesting in parts, it fails to get to grips with its task in any really practical way. For those who have artistic abilities already, much is déjà vu, and anyone else will probably only be mentally stimulated but frustrated by it. How To books in this field are probably impossible, but the successful candidate would have to be at least twice the size. Reasonable try nonetheless.

Oliver Frey

UNQUENCHABLE FIRE

Rachel Pollock
Publisher **Century Hutchinson,** *Format* **hardback, £11.95, paperback £5.95**
Category **Fantasy/science fiction**



Rachel Pollock's first novel is a synthesis of North American Magic Realism and conventions from the science fiction and fantasy genres.

The story is set in a bizarre alternate America, in many ways familiar, but governed by magic, ritual and superstition. The time is now, but it is a present grown from a quite different past. Eighty-seven years ago the USA underwent a revolution of a spiritual, not secular, nature, making miracles and wonderment common, everyday events.

Divorcee Jennifer Mazdan lives in the staid community of Poughkeepsie, an uneasy suburbanite employed as a 'server' by the Mid-Hudson Energy Board, and looking forward like everyone else to the annual Day of Truth, the most important festival of the year.

Her society holds in the highest regard the Living Masters – story, or rather 'picture', tellers – who keep alive tales about the Legendary Founders. One of the greatest Masters is Allan Lightstorm, and for the first time he is coming to Poughkeepsie on the Day of Truth, to weave his potent tales.

Strange things begin to happen to Jennie – strange even by the standards of this crazy world – including 'unauthorised' dreams, and a series of synchronicities concerning revered Founder, Li Ku Unquenchable Fire. Then she falls unaccountably pregnant, with a foetus that proves indestructible, its abortion prevented by spontaneous 'miracles'. Jennie is being manipulated, not least by the all-powerful Spiritual Development Agency . . .

Pollock spent five years writing this novel – her previous works being non-fiction books about divination and the tarot – and has poured into it the result of 20 years of studying and teaching religion and esoteric ritual. *Unquenchable Fire* incorporates a remarkably wide range of occult tradition, from shamanism to kabbalism, Egyptian mythology to African folklore. The structure, multi-layered with stories within stories Russian doll-like, may not be widely considered conventional. Which makes it sound very worthy and a little dull, but in fact the internal consistency of her vision, and the finely-tuned sense of the absurd she employs in putting it over, are saving graces.

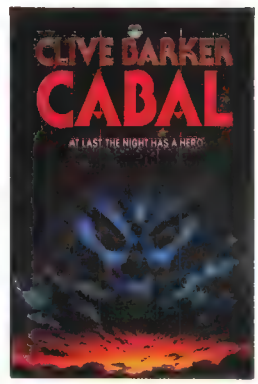
Not that the book is necessarily easy to assimilate – it requires a certain amount of input from the reader – nor does it allow neat classification. It's the kind of novel that's best to just go with, enjoying the author's seemingly inexhaustible imagination and off-the-wall sense of humour along the way. It nudges, winks, and occasionally leers – in places it is very funny indeed.

With *Unquenchable Fire* Rachel Pollack makes her debut as a fabulist of no mean accomplishment.

© Annemane Vink

Born in New York and raised in Poughkeepsie, Rachel Pollack knows vividly the streets and river valleys of UNQUENCHABLE FIRE. Her knowledge of esoteric ideas comes from personal experience as well. An authority on tarot cards, she has written four books on their mythic and psychological symbolism, including the text for Salvador Dali's *Tarot*. She has also written two novels, numerous short stories, and poetry. Her work has been translated into French, German, Spanish, Dutch and Japanese.

Rachel Pollack has worked as a university lecturer, a cleaner in a bar, an IBM production planner, a jewelry maker, a bottler of patchouli oil and a bookseller. She now writes full time. She has lived in Amsterdam, in the Netherlands, for the past fifteen years.



CABAL

Clive Barker
Publisher **Fontana,** *Format* **paperback, £2.95**
Category **Fantasy/horror**

If *The Books of Blood* are Clive Barker's short spells, his book of shadows, then *Cabal: The Nightbreed* is his grimoire, a complete but open-ended system of dark magic, multi-layered to suit the needs of the reader. On the one hand it's a simple macabre tale, with monsters enough for any horror or fantasy fan, though little overt violence; on the other it shows a deep and dreadful understanding of society and its outcasts.

Boone is the book's much misunderstood hero. He's a self-doubting man who's even willing to accept that he's a monstrous killer with little more proof than a bunch of lurid corpse-scattered photographs. The police and public are also eager to believe and Boone is hunted down like an animal through the vast Canadian outback. To society he is something monstrous, which cannot be trusted in human company. Even his girlfriend Lori is suspicious of him.

He searches for a mythical place of sanctuary called Midian, a place where monsters can survive or moulder, if not live, in peace. But, when he first finds this place he's attacked by one of its inhabitants and rejected until he discovers the monster within him, not the soul of a murderer but something darker and purer. His eventual rebirth brings with it incredible dark powers of transformation, an acute understanding of the rules of love, sex and death in both human and monstrous realms.

He thinks he's found a haven but his inability to resist the call of humanity threatens his new life, and once again he is outcast, this time from his second home. The parting is not, however, to be final and, in one of the most devastatingly open endings I've ever read, he's tragically bound to the monsters of Midian.

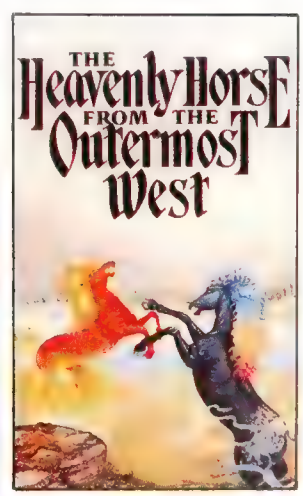
Like all good books, be they mainstream or genre, *Cabal* will breed different meanings in each reader – if they're willing to take the time to look. For some it may evoke religious connotations, others may condemn it for being contemptuous of religion through its glorification of monsters. *Cabal* is, however, not just 'a hymn of praise to the monstrous'. It has more to do with everyday life: a rare, powerful fantasy where what we've always believed to have black hearts may beat warmly, while those who fear for humanity, for the children, for the aged, the kind-hearted moral crusaders, may have minds of ice.

Clive Barker poses more questions than he answers during the unfortunately short duration of his narrative. We will, I've no doubt, read about and see more of the Hero of the Night during the next few years. I, for one, am caught on one of his hooks and will, hopefully, be there when *Cabal* returns.

John Gilbert

THE HEAVENLY HORSE FOR THE OUTERMOST WEST

A long title but a beautiful tale of horses (NEL, paperback, £6.95) which rivals *Black Beauty*. And all from the pen of a relatively new authoress, **Mary Stanton**. It's a book which will soon have her



name up with Anne McCaffrey and Marion Zimmer Bradley, but one which quickly establishes an enchanting personality of its own.

Dancer, an Appaloosa stallion stands at the head of the Army of One Hundred and Five, is the guardian of the Courts of the Outermost West. The story is also about Arnor, the evil servant of the Dark Horse who's out to destroy Dancer. His salvation lies with Duchess, last of the Appaloosa line, who is treated as an ordinary mare, but later is

discovered to be a carrier of the Appaloosa genes.

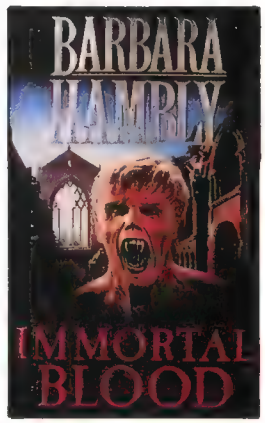
Their battle for survival follows through animal, rather than human, eyes and for that reason the book achieves what any good fantasy should do: take you away from reality, even for a moment.

The line drawings portraying the book's central characters – all of them horses – add to its acute animal atmosphere. If you want to read a fantasy which is gentle, with steaks of dark, but also wedges of joy, look no further. *Heavenly Horse . . .* stands out well in the growing area of animal literature. It's bound to mark out Mary Stanton's career in the field of fantasy literature.

IMMORTAL BLOOD

Vampire tales seem to be popular this issue – whether they're in demand is another matter. **Barbara Hambley** is well known for her otherworld fantasies such as *The Witches of Wenshar* and *The Silent Tower*, so it's surprising to see her leaping into the horror genre, and with such an unspectacular tale.

The basic plot, about a psycho killing the world's vampires,



bears a passing resemblance to Brian Stableford's excellent *Empire of Fear*. There, however, the similarities end because Hambley's book is the weaker of the two. The vampires are utterly traditional, uninspiring and threatening. You just don't care what happens to them. The hero, James Asher, is a wimp under all that bravado. Surely he realises that he can do as much damage to the vampires during the daytime as the killer he is seeking under duress.

Immortal Blood (Unwin, paperback, £3.50) is an easy read and vampire fans will no doubt flock to it. If, however, you're looking for an innovative tale of blood-sucking I suggest you enter the Stableford stable.

MEAT

The ghastly cover of *Meat* (Headline, paperback, £2.99) may make you think that **Ian Watson** has gone mad and entered the world of hack and slash, where psycho's wield meat cleavers, innocents are chopped up, and all for some unnamable supernatural force. Well, on the surface you'd be right but, and it's a big 'but', Ian tempers the grossness of his gore with a well told story and a forceful social message.

This time we're taken into the world of the Animal Liberation Front and, in particular Saul and Diana who, while rescuing a trapped rabbit, unleash a carnivorous power which stalks their country village and, in a scene reminiscent of French grande guignol, animates a butcher's meatman model, cleaver and all.

As with Ian's first horror novel, *The Power*, this book has its political message, but delivers it in a gentle way which doesn't overshadow the story and may leave more of his readers in tune with its aspirations.

The publisher, however, has done the novel a great disservice by packaging it in such a gross cover, likely to put off even Ian's most ardent fans. It's a shame because Headline has one of the best records for book packaging; so it needs reiterating: *Meat* is not a hurriedly written bag of guts. It's not exactly sensitive either, but it does contain a wonderfully ironic story that works.

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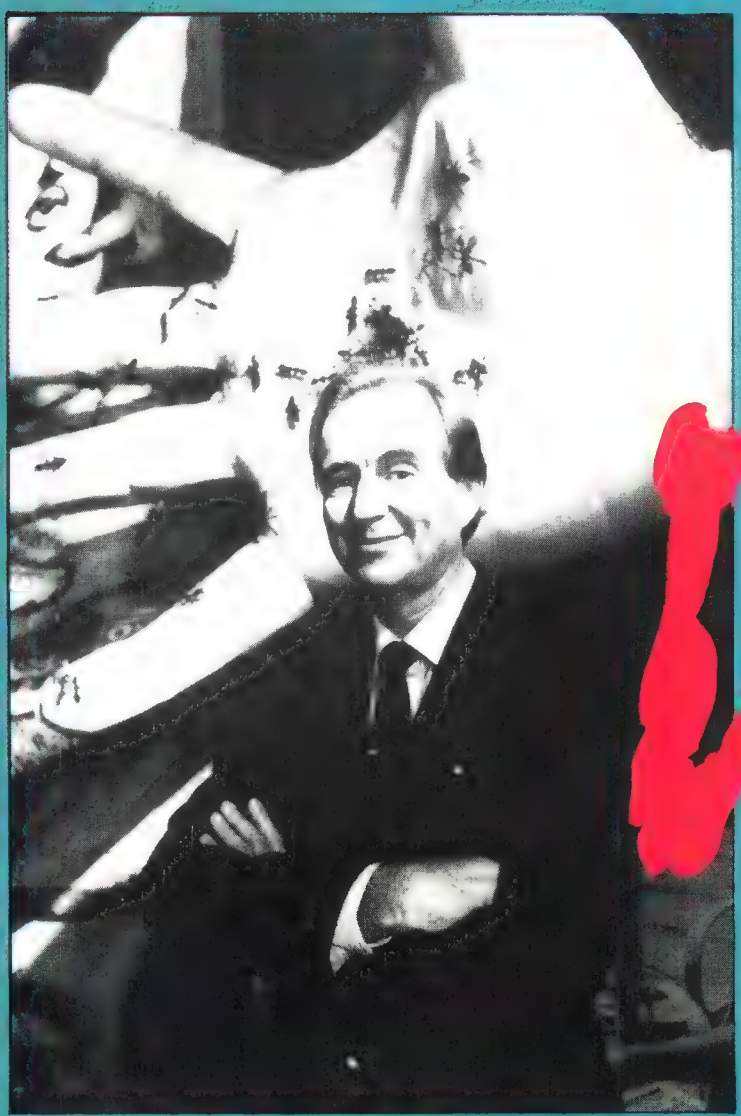


"Every horror film has been influenced by the end of *Carrie* – something striking the audience and hinting at a sequel at the same time"

A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET marked a new wave in horror films and made its director Wes Craven famous – but it also imprisoned him. His new film, THE SERPENT AND THE RAINBOW has won acclaim in the US and gets its UK release in December, but he tells Brian J. Robb and Brigid Cherry that there's nothing dreamlike about the mechanics of film making

Wes Craven's films are a furiously paced tour through a range of genres suffused with horror. The popular image of his films as dyed-in-the-wool horror pictures is belied by the varied creations he has directed. His first, *The Last House on the Left* (1972), was undertaken as part of a protest movement in the early Seventies. A piece of ultra-realistic cinema, its violence is there explicitly to incite disgust and revulsion in the audience. 'It was an attempt to show violence the way I and the producers thought it really was rather than the way it was typically depicted in films. In that sense it had a real purpose to it and, I think, it has a legitimate artistic power,' Craven says of it now.

His début in horror was not a conscious decision – it just happened. As a result of having worked with Sean Cunningham on a successful film, *Together* (1970), Cunningham offered Craven the chance to write and direct. 'The distributor wanted a horror film for their programme. So Cunningham said 'Do you want to do it?'. I said 'Okay. what's a horror film?'. I didn't know what they were. I thought they had a lot of craziness and they scared people. So I went off and spent a weekend with friends in Long Island and wrote something that I thought would scare people.'

The result achieved his aim. *The Last House on the Left*, though, bears little resemblance to his later works. Craven had worked out his protest and moved on to 'do films about other things. Even though they contain scenes of violence I never felt it was necessary to make that explicit statement about violence again'.

BAD BOYS

Moving on had its problems for Craven. He had, unwittingly, marked himself out as a horror director, and attracted a measure of notoriety. Unable to find work outside the horror genre he made *The Hills Have Eyes*. 'I was considered such a bad boy no-one would entrust me with anything but a horror film. Sean Cunningham and I probably wrote about five films between us, but nobody would talk to us. We had to go off and follow separate careers.'

The Hills Have Eyes is different to *The Last House on the Left*. It's more mainstream but extends Craven's thoughts about the family explored in the previous film. Having shown how members of a 'good' family can become killers *The Hills Have Eyes* pitted the traditional middle American family against their depraved counterparts when some holidaymakers are waylaid and killed by a desert family of cannibals. But who are the real savages?

'The rough story was based on the Scottish legend of the Sawney Bean family, which I ran across in the New York Public Library. Once I'd read the story I thought it would be a wonderful basic plot for a movie, although in a modern setting.'

The movie's success established his credentials as a horror director in the eyes of both the industry and audiences.

Deadly Blessing (1981) was Craven's attempt to move his horror films away from gore-ridden shock pieces. A successful whodunnit thriller, the supernatural is understated until the end. The women in *Deadly Blessing* are the predators and the men the victims, reversing one of the established horror clichés. It brings together for the first time many of Craven's trademarks, including spiders, snakes, dream sequences and slow motion to emphasise dramatic moments.

'It was an intriguing notion to first of all look at the hypocrisy of the Hittites [a strict religious sect in Pennsylvania] and then at the very end to say it wasn't them either. In a way that was almost too contrived. As a director I was spending three-quarters of the picture just setting up red herrings. It took a long time to get down to the tension of the film because you always had to spend another two scenes casting suspicion on somebody else.

'Finally at the very end I got it out. But interestingly enough a lot of people really liked that film, so I have to take a step back and say there were certainly some things in it that were very successful. A lot of the images were very powerful. I've had a lot of people tell me the sequence in the barn or the scene in the bathroom was one of the scariest things they ever saw.'

The twist ending, although extremely effective, was not Craven's. 'That was one of my famous added-on endings, forced by the studio. It was shot back in Hollywood after the film was cut together. The producers decided it needed a big spectacular ending and they had the incubus scene written. I preferred it without that.

'I think every horror film for 15 years has been influenced by the end of [Brian De Palma's] *Carrie*. It was the producers' dream to think that there was something striking the audience and hinting at a sequel at the same time. I've had producers trying to impose that sort of ending on every film I've done since. *A Nightmare on Elm Street* is the same way.'

ELM STREET BLUES

After the commercial and critical failure of his *Swamp Thing* (1982) – based on Alan Moore's famous comic-book character – Craven again found himself in the position where he had great difficulty finding work, and reluctantly undertook a sequel. But *The Hills Have Eyes II* (1983) did little to further his career, and returned the producers no money.

'There was a reaction around that time in Hollywood against horror films, which were considered a bad influence on the culture. Suddenly horror films were out and horror film directors were out. I had gone, I think, about two-and-a-half years without a job and had come to the end of my resources. A friend of mine said 'I can always get money to do a sequel to *The Hills Have Eyes* if you want'. I said 'Do it'. We had a budget of $1 million, which was really marginal but it got me working again.'

There were good reasons for doing a project to which his heart wasn't really committed: 'Once you're doing a film a lot more heat is around your name. Once people heard that I was doing a sequel we got the money to do *A Nightmare on Elm Street* which obviously turned my career around.

'*Hills II* was an important film for me to do, just to get the momentum going again. but it was very underfunded, it was too ambitious and it was a real nightmare to shoot.'

After ten years in the film business, Craven finally found himself in a position to make the film he wanted. 'I had some money in the bank and could write for six months. It was completely experimental work and it took me three years to find the money to get it made.'

The result, *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, was the film that crossed Craven over into the mainstream, into the movie directors' big league and confirmed his place as one of the most innovative horror directors: an irony, as horror is a genre in which he didn't particularly want to work.

Craven wasn't fully involved in the series of spin-off films, however. 'By the time I made *Nightmare* I was virtually broke. New Line Cinema bought it outright. All the scripts they were considering for the sequel were from first-time writers because they're cheap. I just didn't like the script for *Nightmare II* and they didn't intend to change it. It brought Freddy out into the waking world a great deal. To me, it had no philosophical thread that I could follow, so I just bowed out.

'They came back to me for *Nightmare III*. I was just completing *Deadly Friend* so I wasn't available, but I mentioned an idea that they liked and I wrote the script with a friend of mine. It was important for me that I was able to make a point in the sequels that wasn't in the original film. I liked taking that next step: the first one was look what you can do by yourself against evil, and the third was what that power within yourself can be if it's combined with other people who have similar power. I'm pretty glad I did it, but with New Line I just don't have the amount of control over the project that makes it worthwhile for me in the long run.'

"*Nightmare II* brought Freddy out in a great deal . . . it had no philosophical thread I could follow, so I just bowed out"

The *Nightmare* series continues without Craven. Does he feel responsible for releasing Freddy Krueger on the world? 'Freddy's not my responsibility. I didn't create a Freddy like that. I've seen New Line's internal notes and their aim is to take the edge off the films, making them more popular and easy to take. Making Freddy cute and giving him more humour was very much their doing. I think it's an interesting phenomenon, but it's not something I feel attracted to.'

TRAPPED IN A DREAM

After the widespread success of *Nightmare, Deadly Friend* came as a disappointment to critics and fans. Studio problems have often affected Craven's films – even to

A moment of gave concern for a zombie (top) in *Serpent and the Rainbow*. Above: Dennis Alan (Bill Pullman) down but not out gets comforted by Marielle (Cathy Tyson pulling no punches)

the extent of the dream ending being added to *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. *Deadly Friend* suffered far more interference than his previous work, explaining the resultingly confused and confusing movie.

'*Deadly Friend* was a direct thing of my agent saying 'You should do a studio film because otherwise you'll be doing small films for the rest of your life'. But it turned out that that was a *real* nightmare because there were seven or eight producers. They all had their own ideas of what the film should be. Then the marketing department found out I had this enormous horror following. They immediately had me put more horror in it. The film became first of all a hodge-podge, then it was heavily cut by the American censorship board who made us submit the film 13 times. For instance, the scene where Anne Ramsey is killed by the basketball was completely decimated.'

Particularly after *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, a popular image of a Wes Craven film was of nightmare sequences. Despite what Craven may have wanted, the producers insisted that *Deadly Friend* should conform to this image. 'They said 'Let's put some dream sequences in'. I frankly didn't want to do them. Originally it was a straight macabre love story between this boy and girl. The things that were added later were the nightmare sequences and Anne Ramsey getting killed with the basketball; originally she was killed another way.

'The ending with the girl lurching up out of the drawer in the morgue was new. So there was a lot of 'Let's make it a Wes Craven film'. I was actually afraid that that would become a Wes Craven cliché touch. I've grown suspicious of putting dreams in my films. *The Serpent and the Rainbow* has them too, though. Everybody now wants me to put dreams in.'

AN AWAKENING?

The Serpent and the Rainbow is Craven's biggest and most impressive film. Again he stretches his idea of horror, this time to make a political adventure movie: a cross between Steven Spielberg's *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and Oliver Stone's *Salvador*. The archetypal Craven horror moments and images are faultlessly interweaved with the action.

'The film has a very strong political element in the confrontation with the Tontons macoute. It also has a love story between Bill Pullman and Cathy Tyson: Wade Davis was guided on his search by a beautiful young Haitian woman and then did fall in love.

'It's my first movie out of the genre in the sense that it's a love story and a political drama. It's a big budget film costing $11 million, with big crowd scenes of up to 4,000 people. On the other hand, the whole third act takes place within an hallucination, so it's pure Wes Craven at the same time. It's a very important film for me in the sense that it gave me the chance to expand my palette and shoot on locations in Haiti.'

The Serpent and the Rainbow has done well on the festival circuit, deservedly winning Best Film, Best Director and Best Screenplay in competition at the Madrid Film Festival. In America, it has been both box office success and critically acclaimed. For Craven, the film has also, at last, allowed him to escape his pigeon-holing as a horror director. He, however, doesn't intend to stop making horror films.

'I've tried for years to move away from horror. I think now I'm in a position where I can, but at the same time I've had a lot of people say I should not walk away from something I'm so good at and have a gift in. I've had a real interior conflict about my own participation in horror, but I've decided that I don't need to act as if I'm horrified by it and need to move away from it. I really do enjoy making them and I think that there is the capacity to do something quite significant and valid within the genre.'

To this end, Craven has a contract from Alive Films, which produced *The Whales of August* and has started doing a series of John Carpenter small-budget horror films. 'I've made a two-picture deal for films in the horror genre. I'll have complete artistic control over them, which I've never had before. I'll be able to make a complete Wes Craven film. I think that's such an enormous opportunity, I've never ever had that. That alone is worth doing a film for.'

At the same time he intends moving in other directions. 'I've been getting scripts from all over now that are out of the genre but still films that could be strange Wes Craven films. I'll pursue films unique enough to fit my vision and just try to develop more as an all-round film maker.'

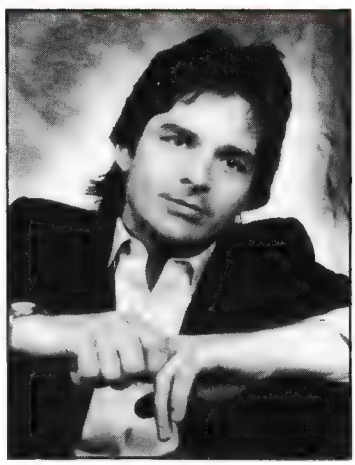
COMING SOON: Massive *Nightmare On Elm Street* Special featuring the films, the television series, as well as Freddy Krueger's origins and future.

Filmography
The Last House on the Left 1972
The Hills Have Eyes 1977
Deadly Blessing 1981
Swamp Thing 1982
The Hills Have Eyes II 1983
A Nightmare on Elm Street 1985
Deadly Friend 1986
The Serpent and the Rainbow 1988

"I've tried to move away from horror, now I'm in a position where I can, but I should not walk away from something I'm so good at and have a gift in"

TRANSATLANTIC TERROR

"People talk about their scars, there's a certain pride to them, they often want their scars touched"


Richard Christian Matheson

David J Schow

Chet Williamson

Writers of '89

Britain's about to be hit by a new tidal wave of American horror. FEAR's Philip Nutman, fresh from his Issue One encounter with Splatterpunks John Skipp and Craig Spector, talks to the three authors spearheading the attack

The most exciting development in the genre over the

the diversity of

not talking 32 flavours of hack instead of 13 but authors who are wide-ranging, experiment stylistically and are, above all, good writers.

The three writers here – Richard Christian Matheson, David J Schow, and Chet Williamson – are all American, yet are as alike as chalk and cheese; the only thing they really share in common is their ability to tell effective stories about real people.

What's interesting about this wealth of diversity is the way in which the range is continually challenging the 'horror' label, pushing back the parameters of the definition until what has always been a problematical noun no longer holds water.

Being described as a horror novelist still carries a certain stigma despite increasing acceptance of the genre as worthwhile by the mainstream, yet with the growing list of novelists exploring the dark side it's conceivable the publishing trade will have to dispense with the term to a certain degree.

Take David Schow for example. The best known of the Splat Pack in his position as fellow baron of the unflinching blood 'n' guts description alongside Skipp and Spector, Schow is a versatile figure. Most of his stories are horrific in tone but run the spectrum from the elegiac to the brutal, from the humorous to the sincere.

The Kill Riff, his first novel, is published under the Tor Horror imprint but is technically a psychological thriller, and as such has a potentially wider audience range.

Don't be misled into thinking *The Kill Riff* eschews the high amp elements for which the Splat Pack are renowned, it doesn't. He has no problem being associated with the genre – it was he who came up with the deliberately ironic epithet 'Splatterpunk' as a convenient buzz word to attract attention and differentiate the rising crop of younger writers from those already working within the field – it just underlines the constraints of being perceived in such a manner.

If *The Kill Riff* is a horror novel in the traditonal sense, it is so by conveying the same paranoic undertones as Robert Bloch's

Psycho, but the differences between these two mirrors contrast between the writers in this article; similar themes, differing mindsets.

BLOOD BEAT

Since Richard Christian Matheson, son of fantasy author Richard Matheson (*I am Legend*, *The Incredible Shrinking Man*) has a reputation as the New Wave's most audacious stylist, he has first place on the role call.

"Sometimes most of the awful things that happen are totally random; random danger is very frightening"

If Matheson can be likened to anyone it is Clive Barker. Both are multi-talented, in their mid-thirties, have reputations for penning stylistically vibrant short stories and are both heavily involved with the film industry.

For Barker's talent as an illustrator read Matheson's musicianship (he's a drummer); for Barker's background as a playwright read Matheson's incredible 300 hours of prime time TV scripts to his credit.

Now the comparison has been made throw it away. You won't find Barker's shape shifters or mythological beasts in Matheson's work, but you will encounter an unflinching look at the everyday evil that lurks in man. Matheson is interested in narrative compression that borders on the poetic.

'It was partially a case of not having enough time to sit with an idea,' he explains. 'Sometimes you just want to get it out very quickly. And, it was definitely a case of having written so many scripts so quickly I developed a shorthand style. In that respect my style developed without my being aware of it.'

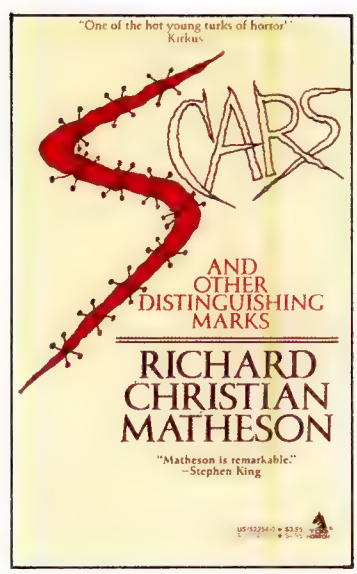
As people commented on the form his fiction took, Matheson made a conscious effort to expand further, painstakingly paring down the words. 'It's ironic though, in my script work my dialogue is freewheeling. I'm often called in as a script doctor and producers request dialogue that's naturalistic. The key to good dialogue is to allow the characters to interrupt each other, search for their thoughts, which is the opposite of the surgical precision of the kind of prose I write. When you combine them in a script the result is often explosive.'

On one hand there is Matheson the comedian with an ear for a good line; on the other, Matheson the investigator, probing the shadows – he worked as a real ghostbuster, a psychologist, at university. It is the latter, influenced by his psychologist mother, who delves into the dark corners of the human psyche with his short fiction.

SCARRED FOR LIFE

Scars, emotional and physical, fascinate him, hence the title of his latest short story collection. 'The things I wrote about in the collection had all in some way hurt me, and I had recovered from,' he says candidly. 'Scars are twice the strength of skin. Also, in Indian lore, they considered scars to be the warrior's stripes; if you didn't have then you hadn't experienced anything. Everyone I know has physical scars. One friend had a piece of windshield cut his larynx in half; another had a terrible back injury. I realised these were physical manifestations of what is going on inside, as the stories were.

'People talk about their scars, there's a certain pride to them, often want their scars touched,' Matheson continues. 'It's like the whole experience is right there in the scar.'



The writer knows his subject having many painful experiences in the past. 'I've got scars all over my body,' he confides. 'I've had many major accidents, was seriously burned to the point I could have died five times.' On each occasion fire was the causal factor, an element which features strongly in his fiction, though it was only recently that Matheson became aware of the connection.

'William F Nolan (author of *Logan's Run*) pointed it out to me and remarked he's never been ill a day in his life, has never had any kind of accident. From there we stumbled upon an attractive thought – everyone we know has thematic injuries: people who tend to get hurt seem to get injured in a specific way. I've never had a broken arm, yet I know people who've broken theirs two or three times. It appears as a self-destructive trend, and that's the thematic link in the collection, though it was never planned as such.'

Many of Matheson's stories develop from personal reference points. *Sirens*, for example, deals with the psychic vampirism experienced by a movie star who's destroyed by the desires of her fans. Matheson experienced this kind of unhealthy relationship during his TV days when he worked on such hit series as *The Incredible Hulk* and *The A-Team*, watching from the sidelines as the stars of the shows received grotesque adulation from members of their audience.

'These people would come to the production offices, little white guys who would say they were Mr T, others who would try to pass themselves off as the producer. From there I began to understand the psychological relationship certain people have with an image on a television screen.

'There is a point of separation between the image we have and the reality we live. We all, to a lesser or greater extent, suffer from that, can be hurt by it, elevated by it, or transcend it rather than let it turn toxic.'

IN TRIUMVIRATE

Matheson is a splatterpunk cousin, twice removed, to John Skipp, Craig Spector and David Schow, who form the 'power trio' of horror's rock 'n' roll generation. 'If they are the knife that slashes the artery,' he comments, 'I'm the injection that penetrates the vein.'

Aside from being friends, Matheson and Schow are Los Angeles residents, a factor that often finds its way into their work, most memorably in *Hell*, one of the former's especially vivid vignettes. In it a woman is killed in the Hollywood Hills by a carload of creeps for no apparent reason.

'Sometimes the most awful things that happen are totally random, which is the point of that story; random danger is very frightening,' he opines, but Matheson has a theory that implies even the most random incident may have a rhyme and a reason to it. 'Perhaps, when you are at a point of tragedy and desperation you invite more toward yourself through a psychic language. You feel the emotional scars and invite

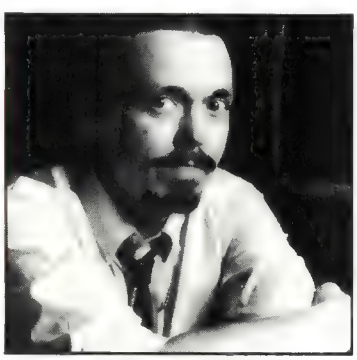
others to touch them. If you do that, why? My interests lie in that direction.'

Although *Scars and Other Distinguishing Marks* has been universally hailed as a fine collection from a strong new talent, Matheson is not one to rest on his laurels. In the past year he's developed a TV series, formed an independent production company, is producing three films for different studios, has sold a screenplay he wrote with his father to Columbia Pictures, is working on a novel set in Hollywood, and is preparing for his directorial debut.

Like Clive Barker, the more he does, the more he finds he can do. 'I've always been able to juggle several different things at once,' he admits. His abundant talent is certain to make Matheson one of the most influential figures in the field during the next decade.

ROCK 'N' ROLL FICTION

Like Richard Christian Matheson, David Schow's fiction is frequently a direct response to the environment in which he lives. A denizen of downtown Hollywood he's familiar with the streetlife conjured up in the classic Kinks song *Hollywood Boulevard*, the cheap and tawdry trappings of Tinseltown, the winners and losers who populate the streets of shattered illusions and the moral bankruptcy of an industry based on fabrication.



That world has permeated much of the author's best short fiction, including *Coming Soon to a Theatre Near You, Blood Rape of the Lust Ghouls*, The World Fantasy Award-winning *Red Light*, and his most recent novella, *The Falling Man*.

The Kill Riff, his stunning novel, details the obsessive, meticulous revenge plotted by former advertising executive Lucas Ellington against Gabriel Stannard, the preening, macho rock star he perceives as responsible for the death of his daughter at a Heavy Metal concert.

As Schow emphasises, *The Kill Riff* is ostensibly a suspense thriller, but it pulls no punches when he tackles the horrendous effects of violence and its aftermath, a factor that qualifies it as horror at its best – entertaining, yet filled with uncomfortable observations. Schow describes the book as a response to 'the sort of hyperaccelerated social mutation that puts rock concerts in places called Arenas and colosseums – places where, once upon a time you could go see hapless folks get impaled on tridents and eaten alive by leopards . . . '.

It's a serious book but one of the best thrillers of '88. The picture of West Coast life it portrays is chilling in its photorealistic presentation of characters trying to secure identities in a society based on surface tension.

An assured debut, the book is not strictly speaking a 'first' novel; Schow has no less than 17 others under his belt, television and movie novelisations, plus a number of 'violence series' pulps – which acted as the bulk of his education as a writer. Within this framework, Schow is living proof of the saying: success is one percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration.

'I started selling short fiction in 1978,' the 33-year-old writer recalls, 'though I had my first piece of non-fiction published a couple of years before.' This was while Schow was a student at the University of Arizona, planning to major in Radio and Television with a minor in English. At the time he signed up for a creative writing course.

'I realised you spend most of your early years writing scenes or set-ups, not narratives, that I'd never written a coherent story; after two classes I knew this wasn't the way to go.'

Schow's response was to start writing stories and submitting them to any magazine that ran fiction. By the time the rest of his year graduated he had a handful of published pieces to his credit.

WORD HIS OYSTER

On the fiction front, the premier piece to see print was a novella about science fiction conventions, picked up by *Gallileo* magazine. 'I thought the world was my oyster,' he recalls with an ironic smile. 'Then I didn't see another word for two years.'

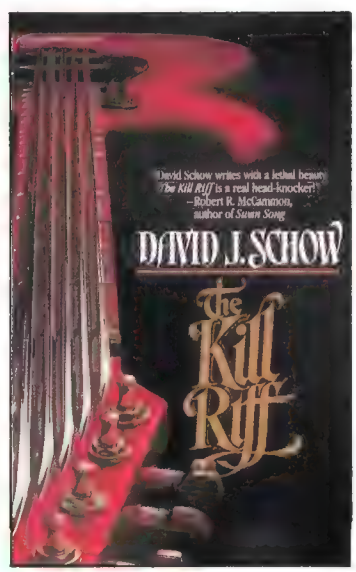
The struggling scribe's life picked up when a simulation gaming publication accepted a story and requested a regular column. The same year Schow was plunged into the whacky world of violence series novels like *The Destroyer* and *Exterminator*. 'The set-up involved you providing plot outlines which corresponded to the series bible. You alternated with another writer, churning this stuff out under a pseudonym. I made four outlines I liked, they asked for two more I didn't, picked one of those as the first, and that was it. The bottom line is, I began to write novels very quickly – five per year.'

For Schow, the experience was an intense crash course in what makes a book work and how to pound the typewriter incessantly to meet impossible deadlines. More importantly, he was making enough money to support himself, simultaneously buying the time to 'write the great novel no one wanted'. Within the year, however, the series went belly-up and only three of the four pulps he penned reached the racks.

In 1981 *Twilight Zone* appeared on the newsstands and Schow became a contributor with an initially sporadic series of articles on the *Outer Limits* television show, which eventually grew into an indispensable book, still available from Berkley.

The new market gave him a platform for his short stories whilst he pursued further quick book assignments. 'At the time I set my sights on writing movie novelisations of films made by directors I admired, like David Cronenberg.' This plan never gelled but his efforts led Schow to the position of penning six *Miami Vice* tie-ins, all available in Britain, while working on the first draft of *The Kill Riff*, 'which bares no relation to the published book'.

"The Kill Riff isn't intended for your average horror audience, it's for the basic rock audience"


David Schow writes with a lethal bequest. The Kill Riff is a real head-knocker!
–Robert R. McCammon, author of Swan Song
DAVID J. SCHOW
The Kill Riff

ROCK 'N' ROLL SCREAM

Initial response to the manuscript was encouraging. 'All those people who had seen the other novel I'd written said 'It's as good as the other but it doesn't contain all that fantasy crap'.' Eventually it

reached the hands of Bill Thompson, the man responsible for giving Stephen King his big break. Although Thompson didn't take the book, his detailed commentary helped Schow focus on the narrative to shape its final form.

'*The Kill Riff* isn't intended for your average horror audience, it's for the basic rock audience,' he insists. In those terms the novel works as a counterpoint to Skipp and Spector's *The Scream*, their supernatural rock 'n' roll horror epic. *The Kill Riff* is photorealistic in tone whilst the other book is impressionistic, but both work; and Splatterpunk itself is a direct outgrowth of what Schow terms 'the cultural mulch' and Spector refers to as 'the Bastard subculture'.

The power of these writers' fiction is a direct response to their environment. 'We're talking about the period of time in horror literature between Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* and *The Exorcist*. That's where we got our basic input – from television violence, *The Outer Limits*, Vietnam, *Night of The Living Dead* and rock 'n' roll. We absorbed it directly because as youngsters we had no built-in defence mechanism.'

It's heady stuff, not to be taken lightly, and has won these authors as many opponents as readers, partially as a result of the 'Power Trio's' attitude toward the media.

'The Power Trio,' Schow says with an ironic smile, 'are tapping into the most accessible audience that's available. We're tuned into the younger generation who listen to the music we do; they understand the rock 'n' roll attitude.'

Schow's final word on their mindset is this: 'Good horror is the rock 'n' roll of fiction because, at their best, both forms are dangerous'. As far as *The Kill Riff* is concerned, approach with caution – the book bites.

THE JAZZ

'If these guys are writing the rock 'n' roll of horror, I'd like to be seen as the field's jazz writer,' quips 38-year-old Chet Williamson, the eldest of our roll call, with a typically big smile and a laugh.

A resident of Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, Williamson also started with short fiction when he seriously began to write in 1979 and soon sold to a variety of publications ranging from *Twilight Zone*, *Playboy*, *The New Yorker*, and *Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine*. An impressive list of credits, but Williamson emphasises how hard writing can be.

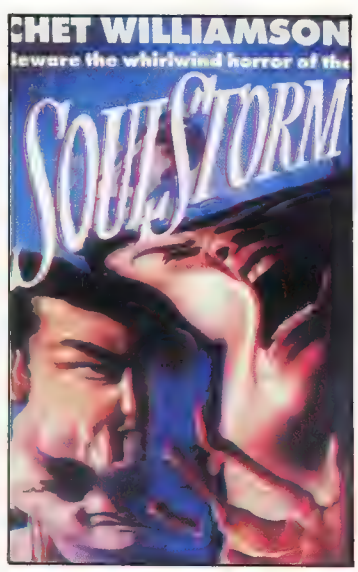
'I had thought about writing

fiction for several years, had actually written musical comedy sketches I acted in for the company who employed me. But that was it. You want to be a writer, but you don't want to sit down and write. Finally, I made a new year's resolution to do a page a day.

'The next year I produced two per day. At the end of those two years I had a thousand pages of short stories; some were shit, some were good, but some sold.'

The sales prompted him to quit his job and plunge into the word pool, and he hasn't looked back. Williamson has four novels to his credit and is gaining considerable acclaim as a thoughtful, talented author who can take tired ideas and give them a powerful new spin.

Three of his books – *Soulstorm*, *Ash Wednesday*, *Lowland Rider* – are strong supernatural stories that deliver first rate chills; the other, *McKain's Dilemma*, is a private eye mystery, but one that takes you on a night journey nevertheless. Horror, for Chet Williamson is something inescapable: in *Soulstorm* the spirits of the insane,



in *McKain's Dilemma* a detective trying to extract himself from being implicated in a murder whilst attempting to come to terms with terminal leukemia.

'I've always loved the genre and have read it since I was a kid. First it was Poe, then in puberty Lovecraft, which is a good time to do so; the usual influences. My writing has grown out of established traditions, which is why character is so important to me. The horror novels that work best are the ones about people. Though my novels usually end optimistically, I like to look into the cellars of the mind, into the subconscious and below.' This desire, with an ability to get inside the character's heads, is fuel that powers the prose.

ACID HOUSE

'I'm a sucker for haunted houses,' he admits in relation to *Soulstorm*, a tale of three men locked in a strange house with a history of insanity. In it, Williamson took the trappings of B movies and the traditional elements of *The Haunting of Hill House* to produce an unexpectedly exciting story.

'For a first novel, I wanted something that had a limited cast of characters and a limited area for them to operate in. I thought that would be easier than attempting an epic. The question I posed myself was 'What were the worst things a house of that nature could do to the characters?'.'

Ash Wednesday marked a change of pace for the author and displays his background as an English teacher in its literary qualities. 'It's a passive horror story because there are no things that come after people, all the action in the book is the response of characters to a supernatural phenomenon that acts psychologically on them, reminding us of our mortality.'

A carefully crafted, heart-felt work, *Ash Wednesday* prompted Ramsey Campbell to describe it as 'a haunting vision of purgatory on earth . . . ', and it's as far removed from Splatterpunk as you can get.

Of the new generation of horror writers Williamson says: 'The genre's so extreme you can have this, this and this. There's room for everybody – so long as they're good'. He conceeds the diversity of talent is exciting. 'It's nice that the field is still developing, that people of different styles and attitudes can work in the same area without getting repetitive.'

Williamson intends to continue exploring the dark regions, but maybe one day he will get around to 'writing a Great American Novel about baseball'.

Until then, pleasant nightmares.

"Horror novels that work best are the ones about people. I like to look into the cellars of the mind, into the sub-conscious and below"

THE BLOB BOUNCES BACK

"I loved the film but the truth was that the original was a low-budget throwaway cheapie'

Film director Chuck Russell, well known to Brits as the saviour of the NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET series of movies, wanted to make a film in which the star was a massive lump of goop. Here he tells FEAR's Marc Shapiro how that seemingly strange urge heralded the meteoric return of Fifties B-movie monster The Blob

Inspiration is where you find it. It struck director Chuck Russell in 1985 after an hour's stint in front of the old telly. 'I was turning the dial and all of a sudden I changed the channel and there was *The Blob*,' recalls Russell, who made big horror film noises with his previous effort *A Nightmare on Elm Street III: The Dream Warriors*. 'I really got excited about the potential that film had and the fact that it left so much room to elaborate on the premise.'

Russell took the creaky Fifties exploitation picture's potential, added a wallop of Eighties technology and know-how, mixed well, and the result, *The Blob*, will be unspooling in English theatres in February. But Russell's quick to point out that his remaking *The Blob* is not his way of paying homage to a terror classic.

'I've never believed that *The Blob* was a full-blown classic,' offers Russell. 'I loved the film but the truth was that the original was a low-budget throwaway cheapie.'

The original film spotlighted the emerging acting talents of a then unknown Steve McQueen and told the often hokey exploits of a slimeball from outer space that, after emerging from a meteor, begins gobbling up the population of a small midwestern town.

In classic Fifties fashion the town's teenagers ultimately defeat the jelly roll, which is frozen solid and flown to the north pole. The swiss cheese concept was not lost on film-maker Larry Hagman (*Dallas*'s J.R.) who, in 1972, directed a basically unfunny, unscary, sequel called *Son of Blob*.

But never-better-than-cult-status of *The Blob* did not deter Russell from approaching producer Jack Harris (who owned

Unusual companions: Dick Cavett, Freddy and Zsa Zsa Gabor in *Elm Street III*. Right: Kevin Dillon faces *The Blob* and, below: what makes you think a Blob passed this way?

"I looked at a lot of footage of amoebas and jellyfish and ultimately came up with a Blob that was fast-moving, predatorial and very nasty"

The Blob's rights) with the idea of doing up his schlock fave in big-budget style.

'I've always wanted to make a big monster movie with a capital M,' elaborates Russell, 'and I felt *The Blob* was a great archetype for that kind of terror. The Blob is this organic, disease-ridden blob of a creature that made a lot of sense as a vehicle to scare people. What I proposed to do was to elaborate on that fear and bring it up to Eighties standards.'

SPEEDY SUCKER

Russell and writing partner Frank Darabont concocted a script which contains some classic first *Blob* bits such as the meteor crashing to earth and the title creature escaping and chowing down on the derelict. The Blob in the movie house scene (played a little rougher in this version) is also given a second turn. And, like the previous incarnation, a pair of teen rebels without a cause (Kevin Dillon, Shawnee Smith) and some interesting secondary players (Donovan Leitch and Del Close) are true to the original film's basic storyline.

But Russell recalls taking great pains in revamping the Blob itself. 'In the original any healthy person could run away from the Blob,' Russell reckons. 'The only time anybody got blobbed was when they tripped or broke a heel. Before I wrote the script I looked at a lot of *National Geographic* footage of amoebas and jellyfish and ultimately came up with a Blob that was fast-moving, predatorial and very nasty.'

All well and good, but Russell, who claims the writer in him gave the director in him a tougher job, instinctively knew that an Eighties Blob would require some modern FX technology. The original Blob was a half-inflated weather balloon (not unlike another famous set of blobs – the guards in Patrick McGoohan's *Prisoner* cult TV series), manipulated on tilted sets and supplemented with a good dose of silicon gel. At the time that was state-of-the-art.

'There was a reason why there were no lingering shots of the Blob or sequences where it had to do a lot of prolonged movement. If you looked at it long enough you could tell it was fake looking,' says the director.

Which is why Russell went to special effects man Tony Gardner with instructions to make the monster look real. Gardner, who cut his teeth on such genre films as *Return of the Living Dead*, told anyone who would listen, prior to *The Blob*'s US release, how he made the monster.

'It's basically silk bags injected with gravy thickener,' explains Gardner. 'Silk bags of various sizes were sewn together and the food additive Methacil was put in them. By manipulating those sacks you were able to get distinct but limited movement and a Blob that could roll rather freely and still keep its shape.'

Gardner offers that about 30 people manned what he describes as his 'Blob shop', creating and manipulating makeup miniatures and assorted Blob kill FX. among his helpmates were Brian Wade, Steve Frakes, Cindy Sercelj, Mike Smithson, Evan Brainard and Todd Chaney.

CREATURE FEATURE

The Blob Mark II, with a budget Russell describes as 'a lot less than the $19 million that's been quoted', shot for 12 weeks in the town of Abbyville, Louisiana, and necessitated Russell and company slogging around in sewers, bad weather and more goo than even blobster Russell could have imagined.

'It was one thing to imagine scenes in the script and another to actually get out there in the middle

of a cold rainy night and execute them,' cringes Russell at those Blob memories.

Indicative of the scope of this new and improved Blob was a sequence shot on a California soundstage after completion of principal photography in Louisiana.

On a mockup stage designed to represent the city hall interior for a Blob attack, Russell is patiently instructing a dozen actors and extras on the fine art of barricading a door against the monster. Outside the door a handful of FX people, armed with glorified joysticks and various-sized Blob segments, ready their charges. At Russell's signal actors scream, holler and get crazed while attempting to block the creature's entry. The FX technicians push Blob parts through and under cracks in the door and push from their side to indicate a massive, oozing weight on its way through.

'There were a lot of scenes like that,' recalls Russell. 'It wasn't one of those films where everything could be shot first unit and we could wrap up and go home. This film contained all kinds of second and third unit work and a ton of post-production. It was a very exhausting film to make.'

"I'm pretty confident that the US cut of the film is what British audiences will be seeing"

BLOB HITS BRITAIN

Russell is confident that his 'horrific images' won't be lost on British audiences.

'I'm pretty confident that the US cut of the film is what British audiences will be seeing,' he says. 'I got some pretty strong images past the censors in this country and I'm fairly sure that is the cut of the film that overseas audiences will see.'

In the same breath the director hopes that overseas audiences will look further than the rolling slime for the theme he's taken great pains to get across.

'I've always felt there's a dormant hero in every person,' he theorises, 'and that, given the right circumstances, that heroic nature will rise to the occasion. With *The Blob* I felt like I was pitting everyman against a greater evil just to see if everyman had it in him. Hopefully that point will get across to people who see the film.'

Russell is currently at the negotiating stage on two upcoming ventures, one of which he describes as 'a genre project'. But he concludes by offering that visions of *The Blob* still dance in his head.

'I fell like I've done my best possible Blob. I gave it my all and that's as much Blob as I have to give. But, if a really good story came along – who knows. I might just have a little more to give.'

FEAR competition

FREDDY'S NIGHTMARES

WIN A VIDEO

Freddy Krueger, son of a thousand maniacs, now has his own television series. **FEAR** has two full-colour Freddy standees and ten copies of the TV pilot episode on video to give away, courtesy of **Braveworld Pictures**.

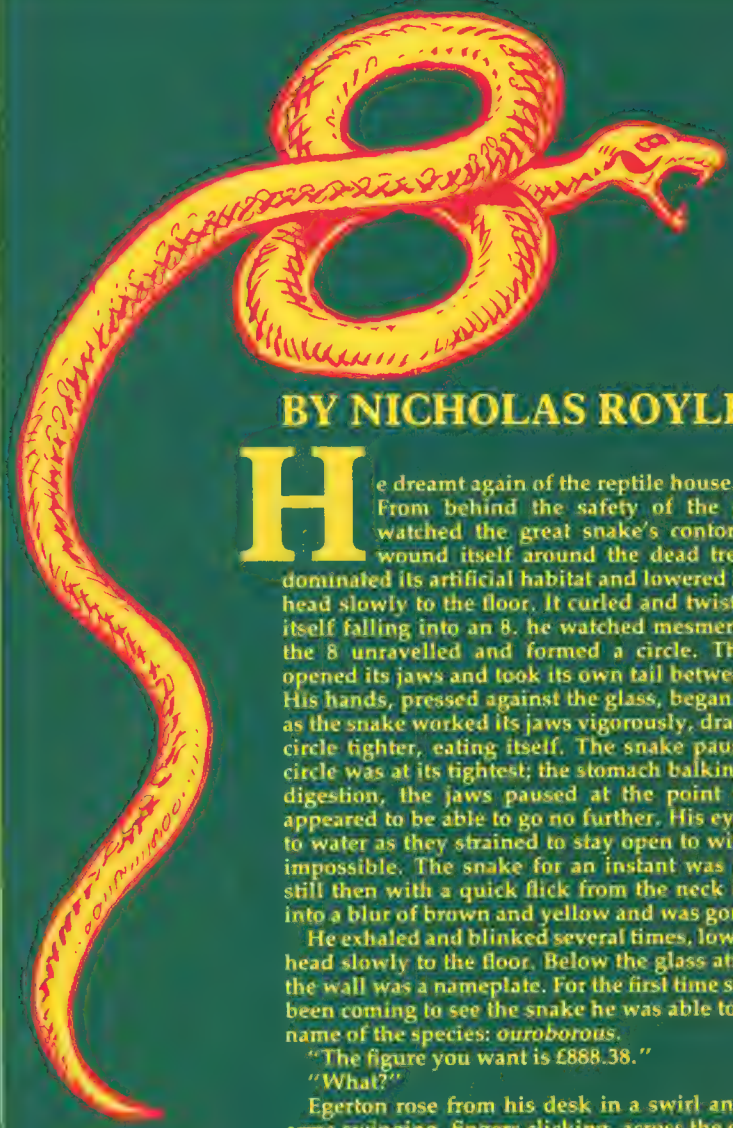
Freddy's Nightmares tells the unexpurgated story behind the sinister slasher's rise to his throne of terror, a story which has not been told in any of the movies. Directed by **Tobe Hooper**, of *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Poltergeist* fame, it reveals a gruesome picture of Freddy's grisly lifestyle, the slayings of children and the court trial from which he was acquitted. It goes on to show the punishment exacted on Freddy by the angry parents of Elm Street in Springwood.

They burned him to death . . . but he wouldn't leave their nightmares.

We can now offer two ways to have Freddy in the comfort of your own livingroom. The unique large colour standees of Freddy go to the top two prize winners, together with a copy of the video. Eight runners up receive a copy of the video.

Just tell us **the name of the character Freddy's alter-ego Robert Englund played in the TV science fiction series *V***. Write the answer on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelop and don't forget your name and address or the video format you require – VHS or Beta – and send it to: **FREDDY'S NIGHTMARES COMPETITION, FEAR, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB**. All entries must be in by January 15. No employees of Newsfield, **FEAR** or Braveworld may take part.

Next Issue: A fantastic full colour Freddy souvenir. His life and death, past, present and future.



8

BY NICHOLAS ROYLE

He dreamt again of the reptile house. From behind the safety of the glass he watched the great snake's contortions. It wound itself around the dead tree which dominated its artificial habitat and lowered its broad head slowly to the floor. It curled and twisted upon itself falling into an 8. he watched mesmerised and the 8 unravelled and formed a circle. The snake opened its jaws and took its own tail between them. His hands, pressed against the glass, began to sweat as the snake worked its jaws vigorously, drawing the circle tighter, eating itself. The snake paused. The circle was at its tightest; the stomach balking at self-digestion, the jaws paused at the point where it appeared to be able to go no further. His eyes began to water as they strained to stay open to witness the impossible. The snake for an instant was perfectly still then with a quick flick from the neck it melted into a blur of brown and yellow and was gone.

He exhaled and blinked several times, lowering his head slowly to the floor. Below the glass attached to the wall was a nameplate. For the first time since he'd been coming to see the snake he was able to read the name of the species: *ouroborous*.

"The figure you want is £888.38."

"What?"

Egerton rose from his desk in a swirl and strode, arms swinging, fingers clicking, across the office. He snapped a yellow paper rectangle down onto Linden's desk and propelled himself with vigour through the interconnecting doorway into the back office.

Every action was performed with a flourish; even the very smallest movements exaggerated. He could not walk ten yards without swinging his arms like a guardsman and clicking his fingers like so many triggers. Sitting still in his chair – where he was again now, having swept back past Linden, steering around his desk like a powerboat – seemed scarcely possible. He leant forward and jabbed at his keyboard as if it contained the Nuclear Button. Gazing at the luminous screen he grasped his pink-shaven chin and stroked it thoughtfully. Pushing his glasses up his nose was a major event, involving, as it did, a method-acting flick of the wrist.

"The bus crawled past the wreckage, as if even the driver was slowing down for a better look"

Wearily, Linden peeled the yellow paper away from the desktop, to which it had become attached by its adhesive strip. These yellow pads had been ordered by Egerton. He'd only been with the company a week and already on his own initiative he was spending the company's money. In fact, it wouldn't surprise Linden to learn that Egerton had used his own money, so keen was he to stamp his own personality on the office. These yellow pads *were* Egerton; they had his efficiency in their adhesive strip.

Linden stopped doodling and finally saw the figure he'd been staring at, written on the yellow paper in Egerton's scratchy hand: 888.88. Linden frowned.

"What did you say that figure was?" he asked Egerton, unable to speak his name.

Egerton stroked his chin, hesitating longer than necessary. "888.36," he said, his watery blue eyes frank and beseeching: he wanted to be liked as well as respected professionally.

When Linden looked closely he saw that one of his doodles had turned the 3 into an 8.

"Brian," Egerton said. Linden looked up. "Five duplicate awards, three ball tickets and a photograph. Right? That comes to £772.50, which is the figure you gave me. Add 15% VAT and you get £888.38."

Linden nodded. The figure was right, so what was wrong? Something was. And it wasn't just Egerton: that irritation was constant.

Do you want a coffee, Pete?

Do you want a coffee, Shirley?

Do you want a coffee Gordon?

Do you want a coffee, Brian?

Why couldn't he just say: would anybody like a coffee? Linden grunted; he did want one. Not particularly did he want one made by Egerton, but he couldn't be bothered to make it himself. Egerton had his uses.

Just then Whitehead walked in from the back room. Linden stood up and scanned the far reaches of his desk to make it look like he was doing something. "All right, Brian?" Whitehead asked. "How're you doing on those order forms?" "Fine," Linden mumbled, fully aware that Whitehead wasn't listening: he just liked to ask questions, the answers were unimportant.

Egerton came with the coffee. He put a mug down on Linden's desk right next to an empty mug, so close they touched at the rim. Why couldn't he have used the dirty cup and saved on washing-up? Probably because it wasn't his washing-up day. Linden sat down – Whitehead had gone back into his office – and, distracted, traced his finger around the rims of the two cups. He crossed from one cup to the other at the point where they touched.

On the bus, by the time he got upstairs, all the seats at the front were taken and he had to sit in the rear half with the smokers. He couldn't sit downstairs because he would only have to stand up for someone else. Taking his glasses off he rubbed his eyes. He didn't like these new buses. Their drivers were able to accelerate too quickly. But the old Routemasters did his route only rarely. He bent the left arm of his glasses down a fraction. They still weren't fitting perfectly, but they were a beautiful frame, real tortoiseshell. The optician hadn't wanted to glaze them, they were so old and fragile, but he'd told them he understood the responsibility was his and they fitted the small round lenses without any problem.

The bus was taking longer than usual to get over Vauxhall Bridge. The traffic ground like rusty clockwork running down. Linden craned to get a view through the front windows. About a hundred yards up was a host of flashing blue lights and some confusion in the traffic flow.

The bus crawled past the wreckage, as if even the driver was slowing down for a better look. It was obvious what had happened: a Pontiac Parisienne had pulled out of a tight parking space at the kerb and was hit by a bus coming up from behind. Because of the width of the Parisienne it had attained a very wide angle to get out of its space. Consequently, the bus, an 88 bound for Tooting, had hit the side of the car practically at 90 degrees and had apparently not come to a halt as it might have done. Unfortunately for the car driver the Pontiac was a right-hand-drive model.

Standing up with everyone else, Linden watched the Pontiac's driver being carried to the ambulance. It was difficult to see what colour his suit might have been; it was stuck to him; in the hospital they would cut it away from his body.

When the traffic moved on beyond the carnage Linden was glued to the rear window. The driver's windscreen of the 88 was shattered and there was no sign of the actual driver. The four lenses of its two sets of longitudinally mounted headlamps were also

smashed.

He regained his seat and ground his back teeth until Hither Green. When seats at the front were vacated he didn't move forward but remained perched next to a fat man in overalls smoking Capstan Full.

The image which he couldn't get out of his mind was not of the injured driver but of the front end of his smashed-up car.

Egerton ripped open the mail like it contained military despatches to the front line and he was the commander in the field. Lives were at stake.

Pete Kowalski was going on about how in the TV industry in the States, his native country, people got into work at 8am and often earlier if there was a working breakfast planned. Kowalski's ambition surpassed the opportunities available in a TV producers' trade association. Linden guessed Kowalski would soon move on.

"The way you say that indicates you think it's a good thing," Linden commented.

"It sure is," said Kowalski.

"Why?" asked Linden.

"People get more work done. You try getting people in at that time in the UK."

They wouldn't be there.

Except Egerton. He'd be there.

"The annoying thing is," Egerton chipped in, "they always give you smoked salmon and buck's fizz. I mean, for breakfast! I'd just as soon dispense with the breakfast and get on with the work."

Linden had given up asking if they had lives outside of work. He scribbled on his pad, but he was only doodling: if he sat and stared into space they'd only go and tell Whitehead he was short of something to do. He wondered where the Pontiac was now. At a scrapyard or a garage or just pushed to the side of the road? He couldn't picture the detail of the front of the car anymore, but it obsessed him.

"Call for you, Brian," Egerton sang out. Linden looked up. "Sherry from Elephant Film and Video."

Linden picked up the receiver and pressed the flashing button. "Brian Linden speaking."

"Hello Brian, it's Sherry from Elephant – "

"Hello Sherry."

"– er hi. It's about the invoice you sent yesterday. It's a bit over. Only 50p but you know, Lawrence spotted it and . . . "

"How much does it say on the invoice?"

"£888.88 and I – "

"Yes, look." Linden was sweating." 'It was our mistake. It should be £888.38. Just amend the invoice and pay the correct amount. Sorry."

Egerton clicked past his desk.

His pad was covered with serpentine doodles; loops and cross-loops, a string of joined-up fs going right across the page, bunched up like 8s as they got to the edge.

"I'm going to lunch." he thrust his chair back and grabbed his keys.

Whitehead came out of his office as Linden was leaving. "Just going for some lunch. bit of a headache." He always felt he had to justify his lunch break despite the fact it was written into his terms of employment. The others rarely went out for lunch. One of them would go down to the corner for sandwiches and they ate hunched over their desks. Occasionally, Shirley would bend back the cover of a heavy novel, provided she'd already seen the television series, and Egerton would scythe through the business pages of *The Independent*.

"When you come back," Whitehead said, "can we have a little chat?"

The library on High Holborn was besieged by protesting staff. Linden signed their petition to the council against imminent closure and asked where he could find books on classic cars. he found a book the index of which gave an italicised page number for the Pontiac Parisienne. The colour photograph showed an American model, steering wheel on the left. Apart from that, and the licence plate and the colour, it was exactly the same; even down to the twin headlamps positioned one on top of the other either side of the grille.

He trudged back to the office, not looking forward to seeing Whitehead. His "little chats" contained little but veiled criticism and reminders to get on with things already in hand.

"So, Brian, are you happy?" he wasn't really interested. Linden grunted. "Have we got a hotel?"

"I've provisionally booked the three I told you about. As soon as the events committee chose one of them I'll cancel the other two." Whitehead knew all this. The "little chats" didn't keep Linden on his toes; they just irritated him. He wanted to ask for a pay rise but while Egerton continued to make such a favourable impression on Whitehead the climate was not right.

"How are you getting on with the others?" Whitehead asked, flicking through his Filofax diary.

"Fine," Linden said blandly.

"Really?" Someone had obviously been talking. "Have you got enough to do?"

"Yes. There's the hotel to sort out. And I'm still dealing with orders for duplicates and photographs."

"Mm-hm. Only some of the others say they've seen you staring into space." *Some* of the others! There were only three of them. "There's some friction, isn't there? it's not conducive to getting the work done. You don't seem to take it very seriously."

"Just because I take my lunch hour and because I come in at nine and leave at five." That basically was the problem. "I get the job done on time. That should be what matters."

"But do the others know that? Do they appreciate your worth?"

"What am I supposed to do? Give a running commentary on everything I'm doing?" Linden could hear his voice rising in pitch.

Whitehead was ticking off days in his diary. "As long as you get the job done," he said, losing interest. "It's not for much longer anyway."

"Sorry?"

"Weren't you planning on leaving soon?" He edged forward.

"What? Leaving?" Linden didn't know what he was talking about.

Whitehead leaned back and studied his diary. "August 8th?" He looked at Linden. "Maybe it's holiday. Have you booked a holiday?"

"I don't understand."

"Not holiday." Whitehead was distracted. "No . . . forget it. It must be a mistake." He made notes in the space reserved for August 8th. The 8 had already been ringed in red ink. Whitehead's telephone trilled softly.

"Who've we got?" He asked Shirley. "Right, lovely, put them through."

He waved Linden out with his free hand.

"What can I do for you, Brian." Egerton cried. Linden was looking at the calendar tacked to the wall behind Egerton's chair. The 8th was ringed and so was August, which by some whim of the designer appeared not at either edge, nor in the centre, but a third of the way in, just over the 8.

Egerton followed Linden's gaze and plucked the calendar from the wall. "Oh yes," he was saying, "I must . . . just . . . " He ringed the 5th and the 10th and jotted some initials in several different places.

"Can you raise an invoice for this?" Linden let the order form float down onto Egerton's desk.

"Brian!" Lined turned back. "These people want information on the awards." Egerton handed him a compliments slip. He looked at it and tried to hide his frown from Egerton.

He couldn't sit and put his head in his hands at his desk and think because there was nothing in his job

NICHOLAS ROYLE is one of Britain's brightest young horror authors, and no stranger to **FEAR** readers. His short story in our first issue – *The Dandelion Woman* – gained an incredible response from readers. His latest story, written just before he went on holiday to Dracula country for 'research purposes', is an eerie end-of-term report for 1988. We guarantee this horror story will have an irritating psychological effect on you. Be warned.

"Whitehead knew all the 'little chats' didn't keep Linden on his toes; they just irritated him"

that required thought. They would say he was staring into space or staring at his desk. The toilet was the only place in the building that offered a few minutes privacy. He studied the compliments slip. INFINITE VISION LIMITED, it said and gave an address, telephone and fax numbers. It was the logo that worried him. Two oval hoops joined laterally; an 8 on its side.

He set the rectangle down on the edge of the handbasin and looked into the mirror where he could see himself thinking. The light above the mirror illuminated the frame of this glasses so that the yellows and browns of the tortoiseshell seemed to glow softly from within. Tortoiseshell was rare and valuable; he was quite a collector. The markets were full of wide-boy antique dealers trying to pass off 1920s cellulose acetate as shell but the difference was instantly clear to Linden as soon as he held them up to the light and saw that vital flux between the colours, the subtle interface that shifted from one plane to another according to the light.

"It's clever that logo, eh, Brian?" Egerton shouldered across the office as Linden regained his desk. Linden raised his eyebrows. "Infinite Vision is the name of the company and the logo is the mathematical sign for infinity . . . "

"Yes, very clever," said Linden, being ironic only because he knew Egerton wouldn't detect it.

"And it's also a pair of glasses implying assisted vision. Your vision will be assisted by their company, giving you infinite vision."

Linden was surprised to learn the extent of Egerton's imagination. He looked at the compliments slip again and saw what the fluorescent light in the toilet had not shown him: pale yellow arms attached to the pastel-grey oval rims. The logo was indeed a pair of spectacles.

Linden asked Kowalski if he knew this company; he knew most of them.

"They do a lot of broadcast work," he replied dismissively. Kowalski's preference was for non-broadcast; business communications, corporate image stuff, an area that for Linden held little interest. Apart from being generally uninteresting in content and creatively unambitious, non-broadcast was by definition limited. A programme would be seen in a few boardrooms and executive suites where the bottom line was basically two things: profit and masturbation. Linden's view was that if you were in television production you might as well get your work broadcast. It was the closest you were going to get to infinite vision.

Still, he liked Kowalski: he was the best of a bad bunch. But he was more than that. He was definitely OK.

"Pete," He attracted the American's attention. "What happens on August 8th?"

For a moment they all looked at him then Kowalski bent over his desk and mumbled something. Egerton and Shirley exchanged looks.

"What?" asked Linden.

"Er, nothing, as far as I know," he said, more clearly.

What were they up to? He wondered as he sat down in his favourite seat, front left on the top deck. The three of them had gone out with Whitehead at lunchtime. *Someone* had to stay in the office.

He looked out from behind the glass. A parked car forced the bus out of its lane into the path of an oncoming car. It was an L-reg Mercedes 280SE, one of the rare Mercedes saloons with twin headlamps mounted one above the other. The snake twisted its neck back again so that the design on the back of the head looked less like an 8 and more like a pair of glasses again, or pince-nez. Only cobras had this distinctive pattern on the back of their flattened head, yet he remembered the nameplate he had seen on his last visit, which gave the species as *ouroborous*.

The serpent double-coiled itself into an 8 and began to eat itself. Inevitably it pulled itself into a knot. It had been too clever, Linden was just thinking when suddenly a tremor went through the knot and it vanished like a magician's. Linden was left with an imprint on his retina of the snake as a circle. It had flicked out the knot and eaten itself in a split second.

He woke up three stops too late and had to walk back. It worried him that the 8 could so easily twist over into an 0 and then consume itself to become nothing.

At the office, Whitehead asked him if he was up to date with his work, had he left anything undone? Why was Whitehead bothering him? He only had one letter that needed typing. Couldn't he type it? He preferred to get Shirley to do it since the clutch on his typewriter was slipping and all the keys were tripping the same hammer. "I see," said Whitehead.

He looked around for something else to do and found some old spools of film in the back room that needed returning to whichever library they'd been borrowed from. But the spools were stacked in two piles standing next to each other.

"Have a good weekend," Whitehead said, disappearing halfway through the afternoon, knowing that they would stay there until 6pm.

It was raining and the raindrops trickled down the bus window in pairs, one followed by the next. The bus stopped at traffic lights. Linden watched the red light. Suddenly the amber light came on beneath it and he had to look away.

He gave up cooking his dinner before it even got warm; the hotplates on the electric cooker spelled out 88.

He sat for a day in his armchair, too frightened to go out or even to get up and make a drink. If only his milk was in cartons instead of bottles.

When he fell asleep there were hundreds of snakes. They coiled and twisted, slithering and rasping, vanishing one by one all around him. He looked out from behind the glass and saw himself looking in.

He didn't go out to get a Sunday paper but he knew it was the 7th. He wondered if it would help to wash and shave, but he nicked his chin and two spots of blood fell one after the other onto the slope of the washbasin.

He thought if he listened to some music, but all his cassettes were the kind with the clear plastic casing, allowing him to see the twin spools within.

In the end he switched on the television, glad of the single tuning dial. The programmes anaesthetized him to such a degree that he had no idea what he was watching. Shadows lengthened, then disappeared altogether and new ones gathered in the corners; the light, still on from early morning, kept them there. Dust settled. His chin bristled. The clock appeared on the screen. the announcer confirmed that it was one minute to midnight, one minute to the 8th day of the 8th month, 1988.

The last thing Linden heard was the national anthem.

His eyes locked into their reflection in the television screen. His glasses caught the light from the bulb and the tortoiseshell glowed and flickered around the track of its frame.

He waited for the two circles to flip over into one, knowing that once that happened he would be as good as gone.

The reflection held him transfixed, the shell glimmering round, yellow and brown. Dimly, he realised.

If only he had thought to tilt his head over onto one side and create an 8, it would be over now and he would have disappeared as forwarned.

Now, however, the man in the television was no more a reflection of him than he was of the man in the television.

He looked out from behind the glass.

"He sat all day in his armchair, too frightened to go out"

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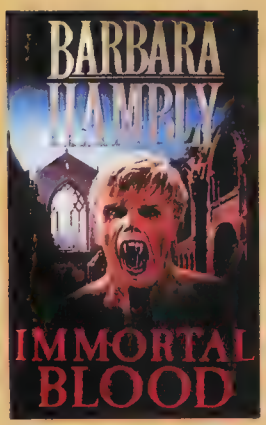

IMMORTAL BLOOD

Barbara Hambly

A savage killer stalks the city's vampires, murdering them in their coffins, draining the blood which keeps them undead. Detective James Asher is assigned to track down the ripper. If he refuses or fails the vampires, there's nowhere he and his young wife Lydia can hide during the night.

OTHER EDENS II

Edited by Christopher Evans & Robert Holdstock

A superlative collection of science fiction and fantasy. Contains new stories from Brian Aldiss, Garry Kilworth, Tanith Lee, Michael Moorcock and Ian Watson. Tales of time travel, mysterious cities, planetary adventure, dragons, murderers, the human senses, alien languages and ghosts in the machine. They're all here for the taking.

MORT

Terry Pratchett

Another hilarious tale from the annals of Discworld, this time about Death's apprentice, Mort. He agrees to take on the job only after he discovers he doesn't have to die. The resulting anarchy makes him wish that he'd stayed in his staid way of life.

MEAT

Ian Watson

Animal rights activists free a rabbit from a trap but suddenly realise they've also released a terrifying carnivorous force upon the population of their quiet rural village. A visit to a battery chicken shed turns into an animal Auschwitz and full-sized model of a butcher's meat man, complete with cleaver comes to life in this lurid tale of flesh-mad horror.

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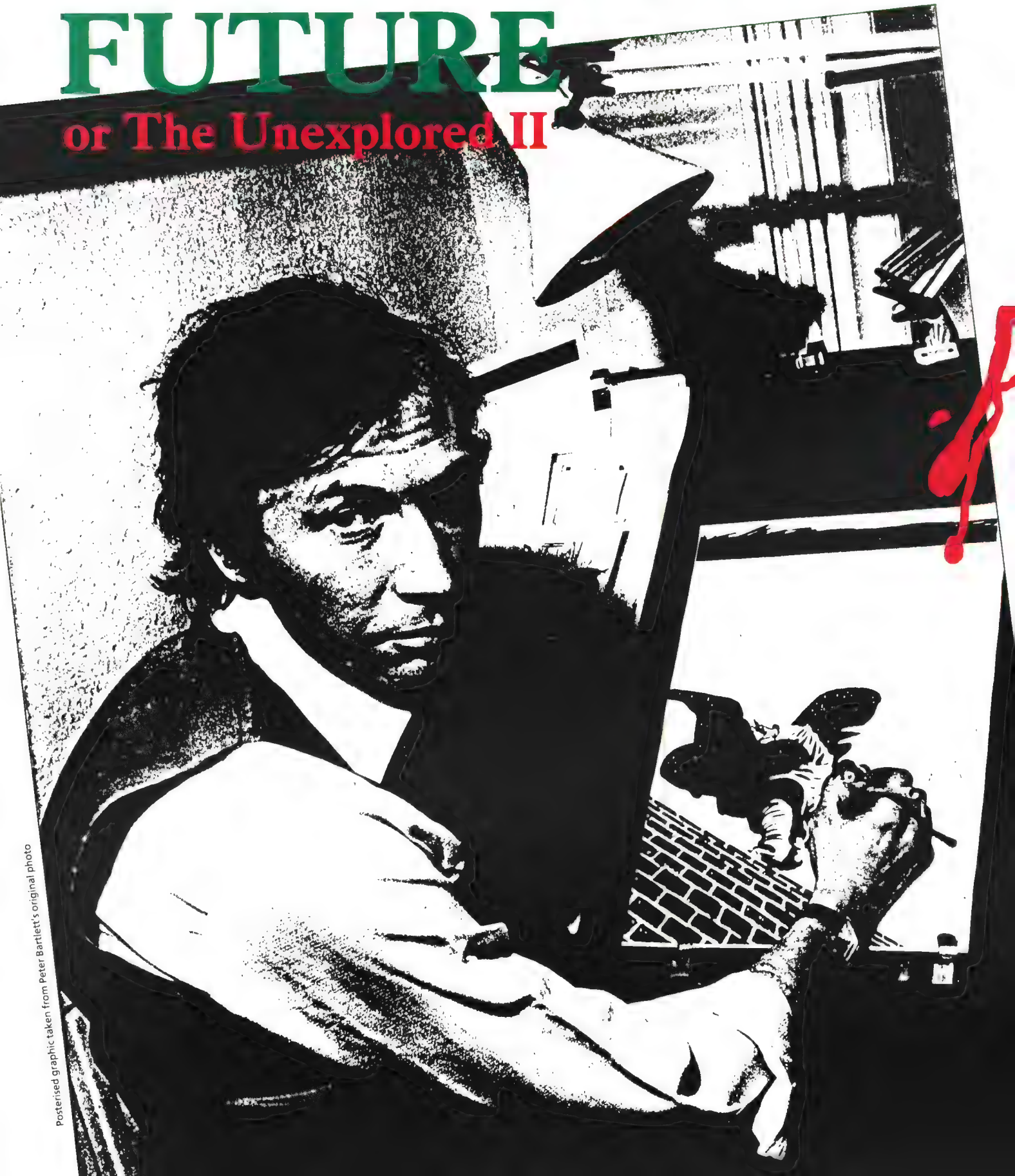

Posterised graphic taken from Peter Bartlett's original photo

Last issue FEAR talked to comic book writer Alan Moore, now it's the illustrator's turn. Much of David Lloyd's science fantasy art contains images from the Fifties and Sixties, now David Keep discovers how Lloyd updated his most powerful creation, V FOR VENDETTA, with colourisation, and gets the artist's views on comics for adults down in black and white

David Lloyd is one of the most amiable people involved with the comic book market – and I don't just say that because he offers his interviewers large whiskies. If the fame which he deserves has eluded him it can only be because so much of Lloyd's time is spent promoting the comic book's image and helping new talent into the public eye.

Hopefully, the rerelease of *V For Vendetta* in Britain and the development of a comic illustrators' school – details in a future issue of **FEAR** – should bring him the attention which his work deserves.

DK: How did you become interested in the fantasy genre?
DL: It's difficult to know where that actually begins. I think the first time I saw [the film] *The Incredible Shrinking Man*, that was one of the earliest inspirations. I saw that when it first came out – I was quite young – that really started me off. There were other things like *This Island Earth* and books and stuff. I think the cinema was the first [inspiration] and then television – *Quatermass and the Pit* and the early Saturday serials on ITV. And then Greek mythology, every kid loves Greek mythology, and it just grew up from there.
DK: How about comics?
DL: The first one that struck me as great was *Boys World* in the Sixties. (It was) one of those comics like the *Eagle* and had some superb stuff in it. In the Sixties I discovered *Spiderman* and *The Fantastic Four*, all the Ditko and Kirby stuff. I was interested in the early Warren comics – *Creepy* and *Eerie* – and then I just stopped reading comics because there was nothing happening that interested me.

IF THE TROUSERS FIT . . .

DK: What got you involved with comic book creation?
DL: Actually being able to draw them. Although I wasn't really reading them I had been drawing them since I was 13. I began as a messenger/trainee commercial artist but in my lunchtimes and in my spare time I was doing comic strips.

I didn't get back into comics until I started wanting to work in them. I left the commercial art studio and thought I would go freelance as an illustrator 'cause I thought I was really brilliant. It turns out I was no good. I got rejections from all the children's book publishers and all the agents. I thought 'I'm going to have to learn how to draw properly', so I went away for about four years doing two different part-time jobs three days a week.

During that time I was just improving my skills, still drawing comic strips, and at the end of that time, about '77, I started getting commissions. the first one was for a television series with Bill Bixby called *The Magician*. That was a disaster because I didn't have any confidence and I wasn't sure what I was doing. Later on the same guy who gave me that job gave me the *Logan's Run* annual. At the same time Dez Skinn was in the same building running *House of Hammer*, and he gave me a job – *Quatermass II*.
DK: With the famous Fifties trousers.
DL: Yeah. Well, it was all period stuff.
DK: But you stick with the Fifties trousers in *V for Vendetta*.
DL: I think you've got to remember the subject matter and what is appropriate for the story. With *Quatermass II* it was set in the Fifties and I drew it in a pen-and-ink style so that it looked like the Fifties. When John Baraclough, who gave me the annual work, saw that he gave me *Dick Barton*.

With *V* I'm dealing with a similar kind of world 'cause this is bleak and grey, fashions have sort of vanished into a kind of conservatism. The last thing you want to do is put fashion into a story that doesn't need it. Apart from a few bomber jackets it's all jackets, shirts and ties.

The impression I was trying to get over was something like Poland in the Fifties, sort of very straight. Even the buildings – Jordan Tower is based on a Polish skyscraper, it looks very solid and bland. That's the only reason. Everything that's done in a strip, including the Fifties trousers, is there because it has to be.

COLOUR SCHEMES

DK: How did you get onto *V*?
DL: That's through *Warrior*. *Warrior* was a monthly anthology of stories that came out in 1980. What Dez [Skinn] wanted to do was repeat what he'd done at Marvel. He used to be editor of Marvel UK and in some of the comics he created, or put together, certain types of characters. One was *Absam Daark – Dalek Killer*, and I was involved with a character called *Night Raven*. Dez wanted to produce similar characters – he couldn't use those characters because of copyright. *V for Vendetta* was kind of a substitute *Night Raven*.

Dez phoned and said 'This is what I want you to do. You can write and draw it if you like'. I said 'Fine. I'm okay at narrative but plot is a bit beyond me'. I suggested getting Alan [Moore] because I was working with him on *Doctor Who* back-up strips.

"I left the art studio and thought I would go freelance 'cause I thought I was really brilliant. It turns out I was no good"

DK: *V* has come back again and it has been *colourised*, a bit like the old movies . . .
DL: It's interesting that you should say that because somebody else said that to me. The point I want to make about the colouring is that you can handle the colouring up until the printers, but when it gets to the printers something can go wrong. They can put too much yellow in, which is exactly what happened in Issue One, or they can put too much red in.

Despite the fact that Issue One is not the way I wanted it, it was carefully produced to begin with, so it would have exactly the right effect. The problem is that I did the best I could, DC [Comics] did the best that they could, but it went a bit haywire at the printers. Although I can understand anybody's trepidation about Issue One, Issue Two is the way we wanted it.
DK: What struck me was that the colours seemed rather pastel.
DL: It had to be subtle. There's no strong red anywhere apart from the rouge on V's mask. There's a deliberate attempt to keep the strong colours of the spectrum low and that's why I'm so dismayed at the way the yellow came out. It has totally destroyed the effect we were after.

DK: Was the possibility of reproducing *V* in black and white ever discussed?
DL: There was some discussion about that at the time, especially during the black and white comic book, but I didn't want it to be printed in black and white because I thought the challenge of using colour would give it an extra dimension. Not only would it add a new dimension, it would gain new readers, despite the popularity of black and white, as long as the colours came out properly, I would retain my integrity.
DK: What has the fan reaction been like?
DL: I know a lot of people over here are worried about the fact that it's in colour but everybody still seems to appreciate it. It's selling okay and a lot of people have said that it still looks great. The fans are enjoying it as far as I know.

MATURE MARKET

DK: How do you think Americans are going to react to . . . one chapter that springs to mind is *Valerie* – how do you think the conservative side of America will react to . . .
DL: What, the Moral Majority?
DK: Yeah.
DL: With the lesbianism are you talking about?
DK: The lesbianism, the attacks on right-wing politics.
DL: The attacks on right-wing policies actually go from Issue One, and I don't think the comic company is concerned. Jeanette Kahn [publisher of DC Comics] writes a 'publishorial' which sees print in a lot of DC comics. In that she makes a great play at the political context. She actually phoned me and asked me about the political context and how it relates to now, and why the time is right for this political thriller. She is perfectly aware of it and so the company's happy to deal with that.

It's on the surface from Issue One, the antiright-wing aspects are quite clear. I think it might be more accurate to say antifascist or antitotalitarianism aspects. There's no specific condemnation of right-wing as a political viewpoint.

In regards to *Valerie*, I think that the comic book market is dealing with that now. If you look at the subjects in some comic books in America – in DC's lines, even in Marvel's – they're dealing with very strong issues. As long as the companies target their product at the audience and put those For Mature Readers labels on them I see no reason why there should be any problems. I don't see why there should be any objections to the subject matter of *Valerie*. I think if it was ten years ago you could understand, but now things are different.
DK: You have no trouble with the Mature Readers tag?
DL: No, I don't have any problem with that. It seems to me that comics are generally regarded by the public, here and in America, as basically being for children and if you have a product which is not for children, you should label it. We're not in the position we should be in, which is that comics are looked upon as a medium as books are, where various subjects can be treated as part of one medium.

IN THE WASTELAND

DK: When you colourised *V*, were you tempted to change any of the artwork?
DL: I did change a few things but left others because I didn't think they were that bad that I needed to. Once you get on the road of redrawing then you don't know where to stop because you're going to look at every bloody thing. My viewpoint about *V* is that I don't value the art. What I mean by that is that it was a storytelling device, never art for art's sake.

I can look at some comic books and say 'This guy is drawing this because he is loving it as an illustration', but I've never had that feeling about *V*. I've never been interested in great renderings and making wonderful artistic statements. I've only been interested in telling a story and telling a story as well as it could be done.
DK: Between *V* and *Wasteland* there seemed to be a gap of a couple of years where I heard nothing about you. What happened during that time?
DL: I did something for Eclipse comics called *ESPers*, which was a four-issue series, and before that I was just doing short stories for Eclipse. I did *Sláine* for Pat Mills's *2000 AD* gaming book *Diceman*. I did a few little things, but *ESPers* took up most of that time in 1985-86.
DK: *Wasteland* was supposed to be the first attempt at an adult horror anthology . . .
DL: Yes? (Laughs)
DK: How did you get involved with it?
DL: DC wanted to give me something to do before *V*. The first thing they offered was *Phantom Stranger*, but I said 'I don't think that's a good idea because essentially that's too much like *V*'. They had this thing coming up called *Wasteland*, a horror anthology, and I thought 'Okay, seems interesting'. That's how I ended up on that.
DK: When I said that *Wasteland* was the first adult horror anthology, you seemed about as convinced as I am.
DL: The impression I got was that it was going to deal with realistic horror – nuclear warfare and child abuse – and to be fair some of those things were dealt with, but I think the general aspect of it became too whimsical. It just seemed to me to go off the rail, unless my impression of it to begin with was wrong; but it just didn't develop along the lines I imagined it would.

In the final analysis I got a lot of stories to do – comedies and all sorts of stuff – and I enjoy playing around with subjects, so I wasn't too unhappy with it. The only thing I was unhappy with was the colour situation. I've had a bunch of bad experiences with colour throughout my career.
DK: What future projects have you got lined up?
DL: I've got a couple of ideas that I would like to do but that depends on how successful *V* is. I mean, if *V* is very successful I'll be in a better bargaining position.

"I've never been interested in making wonderful artistic statements. I've only been interested in telling a story as well as it could be done."

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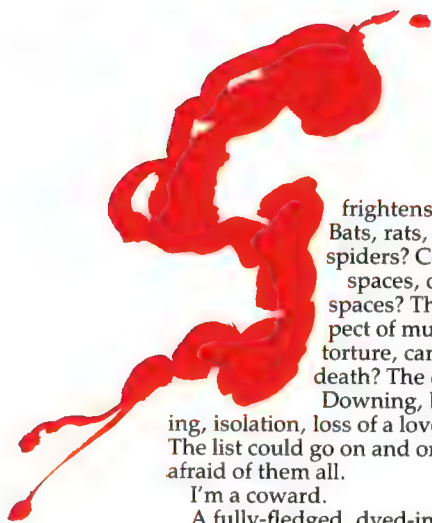
THE LAWS OF FEAR

As a preface to his series for FEAR on the world of the horror writer, Stephen Laws, author of GHOST TRAIN, SPECTRE and THE WYRM, takes a look at the mechanism of dread, why it drove him to write about his worst phobias and how you can come to terms with your own fears



What frightens you? Bats, rats, snakes, spiders? Confined spaces, open spaces? The prospect of mutilation, torture, cancer, death? The dark? Downing, burning, isolation, loss of a loved one? The list could go on and on. I'm afraid of them all.

I'm a coward.

A fully-fledged, dyed-in-the-wool coward. There – I admit it. Everything scares me. You name it and I'm scared of it in one way or another. If If I met you on a dark street corner, I'd probably be afraid of you, too. So, when people ask me why I'm a horror writer, I can usually come up with some pretty good stuff which presents me as a solid, respectable, down-to-earth citizen; evenly balanced, in control and purged of personal nightmare. The fact is, I write horror because (a) I enjoy writing scary stories and (b) I'm also exorcising my own fears. And people who read my stories are hopefully (a) enjoying them and (b) also getting a little of that exorcism vicariously.

"When was the last time you were bitten by a vampire? Or the last time you turned into a werewolf?"

So . . . you're standing in a newsagent, riding on a train or bus or you're sitting at home with this excellent magazine clamped in your sweaty hands. There's a wonderfully creepy Oliver Frey cover and the magazine is brimming with tales of death, monsters and supernatural terror. Brimful of nasty things. Well, the magazine *is* called **FEAR**. So, ask yourself, 'Do I like to be frightened?' Well, *do* you?

If someone was to come up behind you with a knife, hold it against your throat and say that they wanted all your money . . . or worse . . . would you chortle with glee? I don't think so. Or, if someone poured petrol over you and started to strike matches, would you see the entertaining side? Hardly. So you *don't* like to be frightened after all, then? Well . . . let's look at the subject more closely.

SUBVERSION, THERAPY, ENTERTAINMENT

My own view has always been that people like to be frightened because they *don't* like fear. That is, people like to be frightened for fun because they don't like to be frightened for real: the fun stuff keeps the nerves tuned for the real thing – just in case it happens. And when you're reading the scary stuff, you're clenching your teeth and saying 'Yeah . . . okay . . . Oh God . . . I can handle this . . . I think . . . '.

But it's not as simple as that. There are other elements involved. There's often a great sense of fantasy-in-reality about fear fiction that transforms this grey, ordinary, world of ours. Immortal vampires skulking in suburban back alleys, undead terrors in school basements, mutant rats taking over the world. Even, dare I say it, locomotives mutating into living monstrosities (please pardon the shameless plug for my own *Ghost Train*).

There's the great spine-tingling suggestion that those impossible things just might happen. And therein lies a writer's or film-maker's skill: to capture a reader and present him or her with a variety of terrible and awesome possibilities; so much more terrible than anything that could possibly happen in real life. After all, when was the last time you were bitten by a vampire? Or the last time you turned into a werewolf? While you're turning the pages or goggling at the screen . . . for a while, with disbelief suspended, you've been transported to other realities.

At the World Fantasy Convention in October, I was lucky enough to be one of the members of the Midnight Panel. Douglas E. Winter presided over six writers, three American and three English: Thomas Monteleone, Joe Haldeman, Steve Rasnic Tem, Christopher Fowler, James Herbert, Clive Barker and Yours Truly. And the subject: Horror.

It was an interesting debate, not least for the very final moments when Douglas asked each writer to sum up in one word his main aim in the fear/horror genre. Each writer had a different answer. And that's another thing about the 'fear' genre, there are many faces of horror. (For the record, the English side replied: 'Subversion', 'Therapy' and 'Entertainment', but I leave you to decide which of us said what.) Each writer has his own laws of horror. Herbert, Barker and King have theirs. I have mine.

So, in the months to come, let's walk together down some dark and lonely paths. I'll take you to places that you've never dared to go. And when we get there, maybe we'll find where some of your worst nightmares live. And when we've opened that door and you've stared the nightmare in the face, and it lunges out at you on the end of its no-so-secure leash, maybe we'll be able to shut that door before it gets out. Maybe you'll understand that nightmare a little better. And maybe I'll bring you back safely from that nightmare in one piece.

Maybe.

THE CHANGELING

Faerie folk have always been regarded as benevolent beings, as etherial in their lifestyles as in their appearances to humans. Not so, according to American author Raymond E. Feist, who recently made the move from high to dark fantasy with his new novel FAERIE TALE. To prove the point he takes John Gilbert to the bottom of his garden

It's rare to find an overnight success in the fantasy genre but the release of Raymond Feist's first novel, *Magician*, quickly propelled him into the bestseller lists. The story, first in a series of books about The Riftwar, is about a young man called Pug who dreams of becoming a magician. His wishes are fulfilled and parallel Feist's climb to power as a storyteller.

'I started writing in 1978 as a sop for boredom when I was unemployed. I'd been working in California in the health field and we had a big tax payers' revolt there that cut all my funding.

'Before I ever got a job I sold the book [*Magician*] and got a contract, and while I wasn't making tremendous rises in income right away, the book's popular reception, the critical acceptance, was very favourable.'

Feist's early interest in fantasy was equalled by a writing ability which he didn't at first develop. 'I started writing when I returned to college at the age of 27. I wanted to do a high fantasy but I didn't want to do a Tolkien clone. I did think that the market was ready for the kind of book I wanted to read and nobody was writing it. That was a book populated by very contemporary characters who, even though they're living in an extraordinary world with all manner of odd events going on, are easily identifiable for the reader: people you were at school with or people you knew socially, whose values and attitudes and emotional responses are in keeping with what

Raymond E. Feist photograph by Paul Waterman

Below: part of the artwork by Don Maitz for the cover of *Faerie Tale*

you're familiar with.'

Magician started life as a simple adventure novel but quickly got out of control. New characters were constantly added and one planned event led to a plethora of unplanned others. '*Magician* benefitted from my lack of discipline and total unfamiliarity with the constraints of good fiction writing – I had to pummel it into shape and force it to behave.

'I turned in a draft 50,000 words thicker than what the book finally was, and had to take the gratuitous writing out so the story became leaner and more efficient but kept all the complexities.'

INHERITANCE

Fantasy roleplaying games had a large part in Feist's introduction to fiction. He acknowledges that he inherited many aspects of the worlds and magical systems of The Riftwar Saga through his interest in gaming. 'Like a lot of people involved in that particular hobby, we were totally flummoxed by the incomprehensible rules TSR published for the *Dungeons and Dragons* game. So, like most college students in the Seventies, we threw the rule book out and wrote our own.

'In so doing we created a world and a system. I was given Midkemia to play in, essentially, by the people who decided to go along with me. The majority of the landscape is other people's and I was given a little corner in which I created the Far Coast.

'It created some interesting story problems because I felt the need to play by the rules; so that when the Duke has to go and warn the King that there's an invasion I realised that the capital was 2,000 miles away. He's not going to run over there, he's going to have to mount an expedition and take this long journey.'

The book was written against the constraints imposed by the gaming system. Indeed, Feist explains the startling world consistency of *Magician*, at least on the Midkemian side, by his adherence to roleplaying rules, principles and regulations. 'Some of these students had been playing in that universe for three and four years. So, they knew it very well. I could ask questions and say 'Wait a minute, if the magician needs to do this how can he do it?'. And then I would have to turn that into good prose.'

The Kelewan world within *Magician* is, on the other hand, Feist's own invention. 'That was done with mirrors to a great extent. I kept the perspective of the characters of Kelewan limited to a very small segment of that culture and a very small geographical location.'

INTO THE DARK

Feist's latest solo novel, *Faerie Tale*, posed him a problem because it's set in the real world, where it's less easy to transplant fantasy. Magic was endemic within The Riftwar books but it had to be made believable in *Faerie Tale*'s outback American setting.

'I had to start as if I was a mainstream novelist and establish certain conventions of storytelling that I hadn't needed to establish with *Magician*. You could just leap right into this fantasy world because the reader has that set of expectations when they pick up that book.

'In *Faerie Tale* we know that something fantastic's going to happen but we don't know how fantastic, we don't know how soon, and I must take you by the hand and lead you into that. I had to give you a frame of reference. The first part of *Faerie Tale* is very prosaic and it concerns itself primarily with a love story, which is Jack and Gabbie. The kids adjust to their environment and it's about 80-100 pages into the book where things start taking off.'

Despite the difficulties inherent in writing fantasy, Feist still loves the field and thinks it gives a special slant on reality which cannot easily be explored in mainstream fiction. *Magician* had those concerns expressed through the medium of other worlds, but *Faerie Tale* shows his rationale in a much more direct approach through the real world.

'A fantasy allows you to stretch the limits, to push back the boundaries and challenge the character with concerns that are considerably more outrageous. If I do a novel about the angst that's generated from somebody having to make a mortgage payment, that's something we can all identify with. If I write about unrequited love, again that's a very similar thing. But the second I invent something fantastic, there's a uniqueness and, we hope, a novelty to it.

'When I did *Faerie Tale* the point of departure was to say 'If these creatures of faerie existed in a contemporary world, why don't we knows they're there?'. I came up with an explanation for that. I

''The most horrific things I have written are in *Silverthorn*. There's nothing in *Faerie Tale* that comes close to that level of revulsion and horror''

said 'What happens if the rules change and somebody does become aware of them? What is the impact on that family?'.

'I picked a very atypical family for a lot of reasons. It's a very West Coast family because that's what I grew up in and I'm familiar with a lot of that show business background because my father was a director/producer. They're a family of means because I didn't want 'poor hapless family who are overwhelmed by these creatures', I wanted a kid with some bucks who could fight back, a father who had some brains and a mother who was clever and creative.

'So then I could examine how each of them behaved in the face of this crisis, and I think that's that big difference. The fantastic allows you to stretch the boundaries and play by a different set of rules that, if done right, is more entertaining – if done badly it's dreadful!'

SEDUCTION

Faerie Tale has been acclaimed by several critics as Feist's move into the realm of dark fantasy, but for many people who have read the Riftwar Saga his potential for horror – more obvious in the latest novel – has always been apparent. 'The most horrific things I have written are in *Silverthorn*. The two scenes which are the most purely horrific, which were the scenes with the undead, are hands down the most classic horror segments I have ever written page for page. There's nothing in *Faerie Tale* that comes close to that level of revulsion and horror.

'*Faerie Tale* is a more frightening book in some respects because when you're reading *Silverthorn*, or *Magician* or *Darkness* . . . you have that perspective of distance that fantasy allows you which horror doesn't. Horror has to grab you and make you a part of the experience, but you know in the back of your mind that you're safely going to depart from that.

'I don't think *Faerie Tale* is a horror novel but I think it has more elements of the horror thing in it in that you see fear, and I took it back to a primal level. I took it back to children; and the kinds of fear experiences we all had as children who were afraid of the dark, when you knew that when your mother turned out the lights the rules changed.'

Although *Faerie Tale* is set in the the real world Feist doesn't write directly from experience. His experiences are sifted through his mind which then twists them into something new – surely the recipe for good original fiction.

'I think good writers have always got a computer going in the back of their heads, and you just drink in images, so that, perhaps somewhere down the line, I may need a perplexed quizzical look and suddenly I'll remember somebody sitting on the bus looking at the crossword being very perplexed and quizzical. I'll capture that image, distil it and call it forth and use it, but perhaps in the book it's: Holmes is looking at the clues of Moriaty's latest crime.'

The book's grounding reality is offset with an erotic aura which it would be a crime to label 'sexual'. Feist's reasons for turning the reader on with those sensual feelings are purely in the interests of plot – unlike some other writers.

'In *Faerie Tale* what I came up against was an incredibly sensual mythos. The Celtic mythos is incredibly primal. The Celts and Gales were people who were very confrontational, they were very emotional, they were very earthy. Their legends and myths talked about death and blood and rebirth and sex and passion in very blunt terms.

'When I portrayed it I realised that a lot of the stories of the elves and the little people were well over on seduction and abduction. The range is very very much there, so that one of the things I had make a decision about was how much of the interplay is going to be developing those real profound emotions. I came to the conclusion early on: most of it. As you see in the book, as I expose what is going on, there's a very concrete reason why these creatures want these strong emotions in the humans.'

LITTLE WOMEN?

Emotions and sexuality feature heavily in Feist's decision to involve the fantasy/science fiction writer and artist Janny Wurts as a collaborator with his latest Riftwar book, which expands that restricted 'perspective of the characters' of the world of Kelewan. It's called *Daughter of the Empire* and because there's a sequel, and a third book has already been planned, it was important that Mara, the central female character, be dealt with sympathetically. Feist says male writers cannot get to grips with female characters in the same way as women writers get to grips with males.

'One of the things very prevalent in the States is that as we struggle toward a more egalitarian culture we're confounded constantly by the fact that women, through socialisation, are constantly striving against the need to define how they are in terms of men. I know incredibly bright talented women who feel that life is a shambles because they're not married, and without that validation everything else in their lives is meaningless.

'So dealing with that, I wanted to do a book about a woman who doesn't define who she is in terms of men. We started off with the idea that Mara had renounced the world. She was taking vows. She's coming to this game with a completely different set of expectations. Instead of this religious monomaniacal attitude she just substitutes another attitude to be monomaniacal about, which is protecting her family.

'The reason I asked Janny to write it with me was that I had a beginning and an end but no middle. I knew how I wanted it to end, but I had no idea how she would achieve these ends. Janny allowed me to pursue goals without having to concern myself with how real or false choices in getting to those goals could be, because as a woman she could say 'Look this is how, to a large degree, most women would act', and so we could make intelligent choices about how we either worked with the flow or worked against it.

'The problem for most male writers is that they've never been women. It's very difficult to go in with the same set of presuppositions and say how the character's going to work. I didn't want this to be a feminist tract but I wanted to explore a woman's psyche in the same way that I'd explored men's psyches in the other books.'

"I wanted to do a book about a woman who doesn't define who she is in terms of men"

REVELATIONS

The two sequels, *Servant of the Empire* and *Mistress of the Empire* deal with Mara's life as a wife, mother and lover and then with her more mature years when she comes to the height of her powers.

Feist is also writing another Midkemian novel, called *Prince of the Blood*. 'I'm going to go back to Midkemia and it's 20 years following the Riftwar. We'll see a few old friends, but it's primarily about Arutha's two sons.'

He also plans to do one more dark fantasy à la *Faerie Tale* which will be based again in the real world, though not with the same mythological background. 'I want to do a contemporary fantasy, but it won't be Celtic. For this one I go after sources in American Indian lore and the Bible. I'm going to do one about an American Indian who discovers, much to his chagrin, that his job is to go out and find the beast of Revelation and destroy him before he brings Armageddon.

'Not a job I would think anyone would relish.'

Next Issue: Meet Janny Wurts whose solo novels *Storm Warden* and *Sorcerer's Legacy* will be published very soon.

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The Gravedigger's Tale

BY SIMON CLARK

"Jesus!" exclaimed the electrician as he levered the back off the big, one-hundred-cubic-foot chest freezer. "What did you have to dig them back up for?"

Weathered brown, whip-lean, sixty-plus, the gravedigger grinned, displaying an uneven row of yellow chips that had once been teeth; he leaned forward, bare wrinkled elbows resting on the freezer lid.

"The new by-pass. It's going to take half the graveyard yonder, so before they lay the road, we have to lift 'em and plant 'em in the new municipal ground up Borough Road."

Pulling a face, the electrician wiped the palms of his hands on his overalls. "There must have been some . . . some sights. Well, they've been dead years."

"Aye. First one were interred in 1836. So . . . most of the coffins were well rotted. Soon as you tried to lift 'em," – he made a wet crackling sound – "they just folded – just folded like wet cardboard boxes. And everything – everything spilled out into a heap." The grave digger waited for the young man's reaction.

"Jesus." He wiped his mouth as if something small but extremely unpleasant had just buzzed into it. "You must have a strong stomach."

The gravedigger recognised the inflection in the young man's voice. Disquiet, distaste, unease. He eyed the electrician up and down. The floppy white hat, slack mouth and wide-eyed gormless look signalled, here was a lad who'd believe anything; the kind who cropped up on every factory floor, in every shop and office, who, when asked, would conscientiously hurry to the storeman to ask for the long-wait, or the jar of elbow-grease, or a packet of Featherlite. The grave digger had been steeling himself for a dull afternoon of ten Woodbines, five cups of tea and a solo darts tournament, but a faulty freezer in the cemetery store-cum-restroom, and fate, had brought entertainment in the shape of the young electrician who was, realised the grave digger, as green as he was cabbage-looking. "I'm just brewing up. You'll want a wet when you've done."

"Oh ta. Trouble is with this unit, it's been too near the window. Direct sunlight makes them overheat. Shouldn't take long though." He looked round the untidy, brick-floored room. Spades, shovels, picks, rusting iron bars leaned into dusty corners, fading graveyard plans curled away from the corrugated iron walls; at the far end was a table cluttered with chipped mugs, cigarette cartons, stained milk bottles; above, an asbestos ceiling punctuated by dozens of tiny corpses – spiders that had died and been mummified by the dry air.

"Are the others out, you know, digging?" asked the electrician conversationally.

"Aye." The old man accurately tossed tea bags into two pint pots. "They're working up the top-side. Look." He pointed a yellow-brown nicotine stained finger. Through a grimy, cobwebbed window two men could be seen digging in the graveyard. "That's where they're going to plant James Hudson, the old Mayor. Top-side, you see, is where all your nobs are – doctors, solicitors, aldermen. Bottom-side is for your working folk and paupers."

"And that's where the new road's going through." The young man returned to work, prising at cables with a screwdriver.

"Aye . . . that's where they all had to be dug up." The grave digger licked his lips. "Disinterred, aye." Taking the kettle from a solitary electric ring, he limped to the freezer-top to fill the mugs with boiling water, then he paused, staring thoughtfully at the rising steam. "Aye, a bad business this disinterring. You see some things so bad it makes you fair poorly. You know in some of the older graves, well, we opened coffins and found that they . . . "

The electrician's eyes opened wide.

"Well. they moved."

"Moved? The bodies had moved?"

"Well, sometimes, years ago, people were buried alive. Not deliberately of course. 'Spect some were in comas so deep they were certified dead. They buried them. Course, then they woke up." He glanced at the electrician to see if he appreciated its full significance. "No air, no light. they'd be suffocating, trying to fight their way out. But six feet down. No-one would ever hear 'em. There they screamed, fought, clawed at the lid, breathed up all the oxygen and then . . . well, they died."

"What did they look like?"

"Oh . . . terrible. You see, natural salts in the soil preserve 'em bright yellow. Apart from that they looked the same as the day they died. Like this." Eyes wide open, his face the distillation of pure terror, panic, the grave digger hooked his brown fingers into talons and contorted his body as if twisted by unenduarable agony. "They just freezed like that, like statues."

"Jesus . . . that's awful."

"Oh, I've seen worse, lad."

"W-what was the worst you've seen." The young man gulped at his tea.

"Ah . . . that was two days ago. When we disinterred Rose Burswick. When we opened the lid we saw . . . ah no . . . no." He shook his head gravely and slurped his tea. "No. It's so bad I can't bring myself to . . . no."

But he did go on to describe others in lurid detail. "Old Walter Weltson. My uncle were grave digger when they planted him – summer of 1946. Weltson was the fattest man in the county – twenty stone or more. It took so long to build a coffin that the meat-flies got him. Ah . . . when we opened his coffin up it were like opening a box of long-grain rice. Couldn't see him. Just this mound of maggots all white and hard like dried rice. Then it rained. My God, I'll never eat rice-pudding again. Look." The grave digger pointed to something small and white on the brick floor. "There's one. Must've crawled it in on its back." The grave digger watched [illegible] young man peered at the [illegible]

"Oh Christ," he [illegible] collar. "Awful."

"Then there was . . . " [illegible] involving worms, [illegible] rabbits had [illegible] coffins, and we found [illegible] about inside the empty [illegible] stories about valuable [illegible] eye – "[illegible] to my grandpa. [illegible] and . . . The [illegible] condition had [illegible] Time to play the [illegible]

Itching, the grave digger [illegible] the butt that had been tucked snugly behind his ear. "You know, I can't get that last one we dug up out of my mind. Aye, Rose Burswick."

The electrician's eyes focussed on the grave digger. "You mean that really . . . awful one?"

"Aye. the worst." Sombre faced, but inwardly gleeful, the grave digger tragically put his head in his hands. "The worst ever. And I've seen some terrible things in my time."

The young man was hooked. "What happened?"

"Well. Promise you'll never tell no-one."

"You can trust me, mister."

"Remember the old factory down by the river?"

"Yeah, that's the one that got sealed off with those radiation warning signs."

"That is because during World War One," the grave digger jabbed the glowing tab into the air for emphasis, "that's where they painted luminous faces on watches, ships' instruments and such-like."

"Uh?"

"Then, what they used to make things luminous was radium. And radium is radioactive. They took girls, 14-, 15-, 16-year-olds, to apply this stuff to watch faces. Course, nobody knew what radiation did to you. Most of the factory girls were dead before they were twenty – just rotted away. Rose Burswick worked there five years. She'd use a little brush to paint the radium on. Trouble is it dried quick so she'd lick the brush every couple of minutes to keep it moist. Each time she did that, she must have swallowed a few flakes of radium."

"Jesus. It's a wonder it didn't kill her."

The grave digger shrugged. "It did – at least that's what they said. In 1935 Rose Burswick was buried – she was 36."

"Bet she was a mess, living that long after."

"Aye, but that's not the worst of it. Like I said, two days ago we opened the grave."

"Ugh . . . what did you find?"

The grave digger rubbed his eyes as if trying to erase some terrible image. "Well . . . we lifted the coffin, it were intact. It was then I noticed where the lid met the coffin there was like this pale yellow trim round the edge. Funny, I thought, but reckoned it were just a bit of mold. Anyway, when we came to prise off the lid it – it just few off, like the top of a Jack-in-a-box."

"Jesus Johnnie!"

"And inside . . . inside it were full. Ram-jam full to the brim."

The electrician rubbed the back of his hand across his mouth. "Full of what?"

The grave digger shrugged. "Rose Burswick." He

[illegible] Take is a story for those who enjoy their fiction hot and hard. It's our ghost story for Christmas, and, as you'd expect from the pages of **FEAR**, it's anything but traditional!

"His face the distillation of pure terror, the grave digger hooked his fingers into talons"

pulled on his cigarette, hard. "They say she weighed six stone when they buried her. But when we opened that coffin it were like opening a carton of icecream. There were just this big block – bright yellow. It were as if it had grown and grown until the coffin sides had stopped it growing any bigger. But even then, pressure inside had been so great it were being forced through the crack between the lid and coffin, making that yellow trim. Course, we just thought it were some kind of fungus, so we tipped it out. It came out like a banana jelly from a mould. On the grass was that yellow block – coffin shaped."

"What-what'd happened to Rose Burswick?"

"Oh . . . that's just it. It was Rose Burswick."

"Christ! How?"

"Mue-tay-shun." The grave digger rolled the word around his mouth like a juicy morsel. "Mue-tay-shun. You see, the radiation'd caused her to mutate in the grave. The coffin had become her – her second womb. And she like . . . gestated . . . aye, evolved into something that – well – was not human."

"Did you touch it?"

"Not on your nelly. We ran like hell. But when the Cemetery Board found out, we had to go back to . . . IT." The grave digger leaned back against the freezer. "We found it had changed. Just sort of a soft mound and, aye, it had grown. Tuesday was that sunny day – scorching hot. The heat must have brought it on, and it were growing fast."

"Jesus. Then what?"

"We tried to lever it into a skip to take it down to the Crem. Burn it. But . . . but it'd taken root. Mue-tay-shun caused what were left of the intestin' to grow and worm into the earth like a long yellow snake. It ended up us cutting it through with a shovel. She . . . it screamed. pain, real pain! God it were a nightmare. Then – then it were up and moving. What were left of her arms and legs had turned into like swollen yellow stumps with back-to-front feet and hands that had twisted up into hooves like..oh, I tell you – revolting.

"It were growing dark and we were trying to get into the hut. That's when we noticed the worse part. I held the torch to it and looked at it close up. This yellow stuff were almost transparent, like yellow jelly and I – I could see inside it."

The young man's eyes bulged. "What ya' see?"

"Terrible. Just under the surface, about four, maybe six inches down through this thick jelly, I could see – clearly see – Rose Burswick's face. Or what was left of it. Wide, staring eyes coming out of their sockets three inches or more like red raw sausages. The tongue . . . long, thrusting out the mouth, up through the skin until the top wiggled all pink and wet above the surface. Aye, and the mouth . . . opening, shutting like this . . ." wordlessly, he solemnly slapped his lips together like a goldfish. "I reckon she were trying to say something; call for help. You know, that expression on her face will stick in my mind forever. Sheer terror, like – like a continual state of shock, as if she knew what had happened. Mue-tay-shun."

"What happened to it?"

"Well. It kept growing. So we had to find a way to stop it."

"And how . . ." The electrician trailed off in horror as if guessing.

"Sub-zero temperatures." The grave digger tapped the freezer lid with a nicotine-stained forefinger. "Why else do you think that a cemetery store would keep a freezer." He began to lift the lid. "Look."

"No!" The electrician's voice rose to a shriek. Slamming the part-opened lid down, he tightly shut his eyes. "No!"

Enjoying himself hugely, the grave digger kept a straight face but couldn't keep the mischevious twinkle from his eye. "Suit yourself."

"I-I-I've got to go. I'm late." The electrician snatched his tools together then, holding onto his limp white hat, he ran from the building.

The electrician was starting the van when the grave digger hobbled breathlessly up.

"Hey . . . oh my leg is giving me hell. Hey, you've forgotten this." The grave digger waved the screwdriver in the air.

"Oh ta." Opening the door, the electrician hurriedly took the screwdriver and tossed it into the back.

"You know, as long as the freezer's working," said the grave digger, "nothing'll happen. Old Rose Burswick is frozen solid – like a block of icecream."

"How long since the freezer packed in?"

"Ah . . . let's see. I saw some water on the floor yesterday mornin', but Bill said, don't bother, it'll only be–"

"Jesus! It's been off more than twenty-four hours? You're lucky it didn't thaw." He suddenly looked hard at the grave digger. "You've got it on fast-freeze; on full?"

"No. I haven't touched it. Thought you did."

"It's still switched *off*! Jesus Johnnie! Just pray we're in time." He jumped out of the van and hurried back in the direction of the hut.

Too late.

They heard a noise from inside like dozens of loose boards being knocked over, a succession of thumps, then with a loud crunch the twin doors burst open. And what had once been Rose Burswick swelled and flowed out onto the path. A mass of quivering yellow, the size of a beached whale, it moved as fast as a man could walk.

The grave digger shouted a warning to the electrician, turned, then ran. The limp forgotten, he sprinted across the cemetery, leaping clean over headstones at such a hell of a rate it would have drawn murmurs of approval from any 200 metre hurdles champion.

Luck had deserted the electrician. Stumbling backwards over a mound of soil, he slipped and fell into Mayor Hudson's grave-to-be. Down at the bottom, the electrician opened his eyes to darkness. Something had blocked out the daylight. Looking up, he saw Rose Burswick, covering the grave like a lid. For a second, the sun shone through the yellow to reveal shapes suspended in the transluscent body, like fruit suspended in a dessert jelly – an arm, a leg, splinters of bone, distended internal organs. And a head. The head turned in the jelly; rotating slowly, but smoothly, until its face was turned, gradually, to the electrician.

The face. That expression . . .

At the bottom of the cemetery, the grave digger scrambling over the brick wall, heard a muffled scream. He wanted to go back and help but something drove him from the cemetery as fast as his legs could carry him.

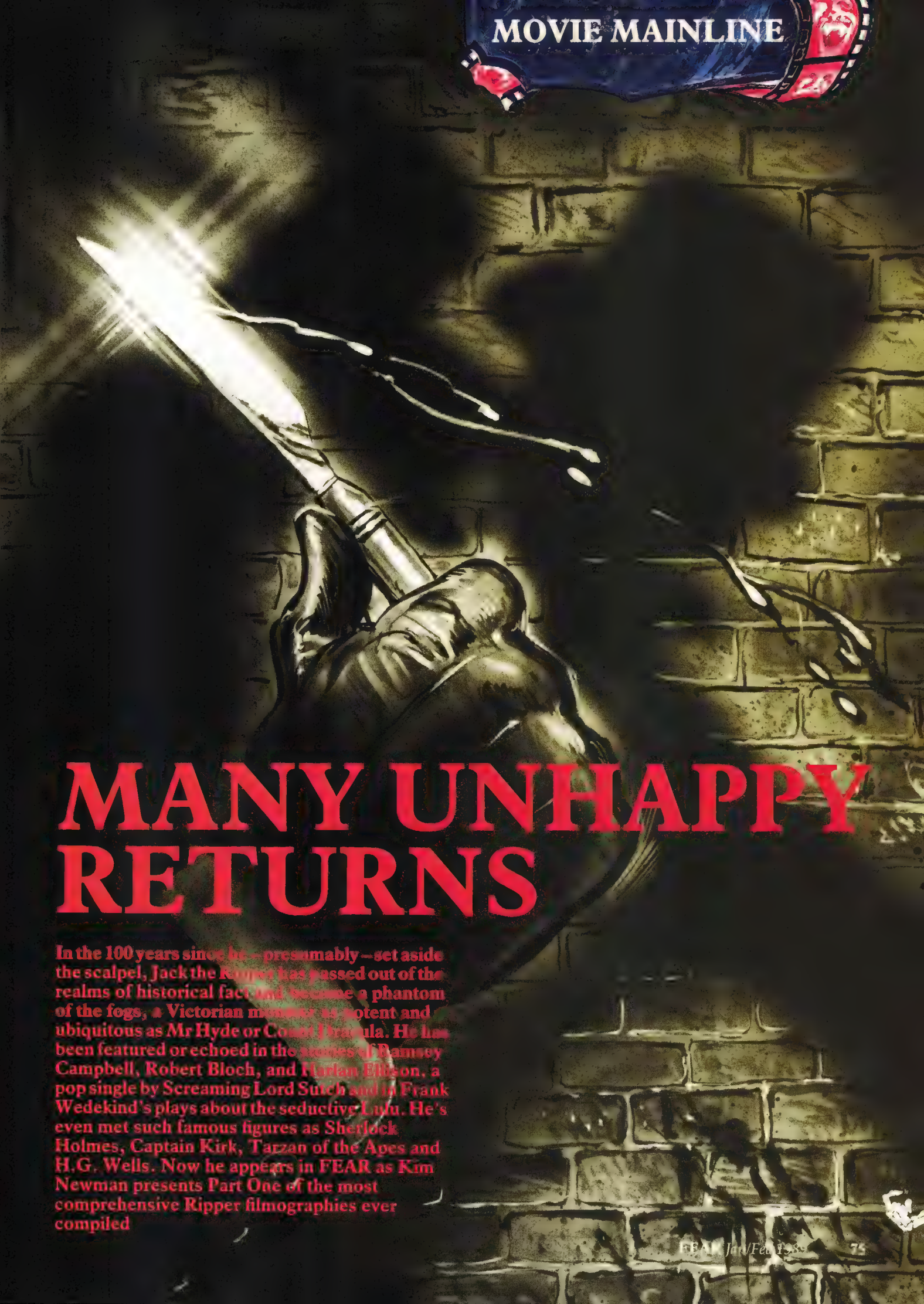
In the grave, the electrician's eyes were fixed on that face as Rose Burswick plopped into the hole.

And after more than 60 years of solitude in her cold and lonely grave, Rose Burswick hugged the handsome young man in the floppy white hat in an embrace that seemed to last forever.

And the expression on her face stayed in the electrician's mind as if burnt there by fire.

She was smiling.

"I took the torch and looked close up. This yellow stuff were almost transparent and I could see inside it"



MANY UNHAPPY RETURNS

In the 100 years since he – presumably – set aside the scalpel, Jack the Ripper has passed out of the realms of historical fact and become a phantom of the fogs, a Victorian monster as potent and ubiquitous as Mr Hyde or Count Dracula. He has been featured or echoed in the stories of Ramsey Campbell, Robert Bloch, and Harlan Ellison, a pop single by Screaming Lord Sutch and in Frank Wedekind's plays about the seductive Lulu. He's even met such famous figures as Sherlock Holmes, Captain Kirk, Tarzan of the Apes and H.G. Wells. Now he appears in FEAR as Kim Newman presents Part One of the most comprehensive Ripper filmographies ever compiled

The ordering is chronological, not alphabetical, showing title – English in [ ] square brackets where applicable – country of origin and release date, the director (*d*) and starring cast.

Erdgeist [Earth Spirit]
Germany 1923
d **Leopold Jessner**
Astra Nielsen, Rudolf Forster, Albert Bassermann

The Ripper made a quiet debut in the last reel of this now-forgotten version of Wedekind's plays *Erdgeist* and *Die Büchse der Pandora*. Intriguingly, he remained a more common figure in the German – rather than English – speaking cinema until the mid-Sixties.

Das Wachsfigurenkabinett [Waxworks]
Germany 1924
d **Paul Leni**
Emil Jannins, Conrad Veidt, Werner Krauss, Wilhelm Dieterle

aka *Three Wax Men*. Early attempt at an omnibus horror film, with a poet in a wax museum spinning tales about the figures on display. After recounting the misdeeds of Haroun-al-Raschid and Ivan The Terrible, the poet is pursued in a nightmare through expressionist sets by the bulky, leather-overcoated figure of Jack the Ripper. While slightly draggy in comparison with the greats of German Expressionism or even the director's better Hollywood works – *The Cat and the Canary* (1927), *The Man who Laughs* – the film does unite three key actors of silent horror – Krass had been Dr Caligari – in meaty villain roles. The popular image of the Ripper at that time was very different in the early days of cinema, while the killings were fresh in the public memory. As opposed to the now-familiar cloaked, top-hatted slasher, most silent Rippers favoured porkpie hats, battered overcoats and psychotic stares.

The Lodger: A Story of the London Fog
UK 1927
d **Alfred Hitchcock**
Ivor Novello, June, Malcolm Keen

aka *The Case of Jonathan Drew*. Ripper-inspired killer known as The Avenger murders blondes in London and a cheery cockney family suspect that Drew, their new boarder, is the killer. In a departure from the book, by Mrs Belloc Lowndes, and play, he turns out to be the brother of a previous victim, intent on trapping the fiend. *The Lodger* was Hitchcock's fourth film, and the first in which he makes one of his trademark personal appearances.

Die Büchse der Pandora [Pandora's Box]
Germany 1928
d **GW Pabst**
Louise Brooks, Fritz Kortner, Franz Lederer

aka *The Box of Pandora* and *Lulu*, Lulu an innocent temptress, cuts a swathe through Europe, driving various of her acquaintances to death, degradation, prison, penury or distraction. Finally, she finds herself in a drafty London slum, forced onto the streets, where her first pick-up is Jack the Ripper. Pabst's Ripper is a tragic figure in an anonymous trenchcoat and slouch hat, excluded from the Christmas celebrations around him, desperately trying to resist the impulse to kill. In the extraordinary finale she takes in the murderer even though he admits he can't afford to pay her and finds a sprig of mistletoe in his pocket. He holds it over her head, she embraces him, and he kills her. Although the originals were written in the late 1880s, while the Ripper was still news, the German and French sections of the film are set in the 1920s of short skirts and bobbed hairstyles. When the action switches to Britain, however, we get a caricature of Victorian London.

The Lodger
US 1932
d **Maurice Elvey**
Ivor Novello, Elizabeth Allan, Jack Hawkins

aka *The Phantom Fiend*. Effectively, a remake of Hitchcock's silent version. In the early years of sound, it was common practice to remake silent hits with the same stars.

The Lodger
US 1944
d **John Brahm**
Merle Oberon, George Sanders, Laird Cregar, Sir Cedric Hardwicke

Definitive version of Mrs Belloc Lowndes's story, with the villain explicitly identified as the Ripper. Mr Slade (Cregar), a mysterious religious fanatic, moves into the cosy, bric-a-brac-cluttered house of Sir Cedric Hardwicke. Merle Oberon is top-billed as an unlikely addition to the household – a very tasteful musical artiste – and George Saunders is merely suave as the official detective on the case. Supporting player Cregar walks all over them with his silky dialogue, delivery and soulful, tortured, glances. In the same year 20th Century Fox reunited the director, screen writer and stars for *Hangover Square*, an adaption of an outstanding novel by Patrick Hamilton, author of the play *Gaslight*. However, while that often-filmed play has a stuffy Victorian setting, *Hangover Square* is the story of a man driven mad in a seedy Thirties Britain. for the film, almost all of

Courtesy National Film Archive/Stills Library

Valentine Dyall threatens Christine Silver in *Room to Let* (1950). Courtesy National Film Archive/Stills Library

Hamilton's book was junked and Cregar was required to play a homicidal composer very like the Ripper in a world of music halls, sleazy Soho dives and East End bonfire parties. Brahm has just as much fun with the Victorian setting as he had in the first film and Cregar – now top-billed, in his last screen role – again demonstrates some showy psychotic twitches.

Curse of the Wraydons
UK 1946
d **Victor M. Gover**
Tod Slaughter, Bruce Seton, Gabriel Toyne

aka *Secret of the Wraydons*, *The Terror of London*. A footnote to The Ripper's screen career. The only film appearance of Spring-Heel'd Jack, a penny dreadful character who was identified with the Ripper in the popular press much as, in the Seventies, the terrorist Carlos was mixed up with Frederick Forsyth's Jackal. Tod Slaughter plays the kindly inventor who moonlights as a murderous, spring-assisted leaper.

Room to Let
UK 1949
d **Godfrey Grayson**
Jimmy Hanley, Valentine Dyall, Christine Silver, Charles Hawtrey

In 1904, a crippled widow learns that her gaunt boarder Dr Fell (Dyall) is the Ripper, recently escaped from an asylum. In the late Forties, Hammer Films was trying to cash in on the popularity of steam radio. It produced a string of films either based on radio hits or starring radio personalities. This combines both draws by basing its script on a popular radio play by Margery Allingham and uniting Hanley, star of the wartime hit show *ITMA*, and Dyall, the eponymous

Courtesy Museum of Modern Art/Stills Library

In 1926 Ivor Novello asks, for the first time round, if there's any room in Hitchcock's *The Lodger*, and again (below in London's eternally foggy streets) in the 1932 remake

Courtesy National Film Archive/Stills Library

narrator of John Dickson Carr's horror show *The Man in Black* – which Hammer had also filmed.

Man in the Attic
US 1953
d **Hugo Fregonese**
Jack Palance, Constance Smith, Byron Palmer, Rhys Williams
Another remake of *The Lodger*, using most of Barre Lyndon's 1943 screenplay and affording Jack Palance the opportunity to wring his hands and chew some scenery as Mr Slade. Constance Smith, who had been one of the supporting heroines in *Room to Let*, is promoted to lead this time round, which suggests the studio wasn't keen on putting big names in this warmed-over quickie.

Jack the Ripper
UK 1959
d **Robert S. Baker, Monty Berman**
Lee Patterson, Eddie Byrne, Betty McDowell
Wooden American detective helps Scotland Yard track down the Ripper. In one of the historic cheats of the whodunnit cinema, the shadowy, caped killer speaks with the voice of John Le Mesurier, who plays Dr Tranton, the most miserable of several suspects, but the guilty party eventually turns out to be another character entirely, Sir David Rogers (Ewen Solon). As in many Fifties British horror films, there is a sharp divide between the good stuff – cape-swirling melodrama, splashes of violence – and the unending scenes of bland romance and down-the-pub knees-up. As with such Baker-Berman historical horror as *The Flesh and the Fiends* and *The Hellfire Club*, the carousing is a bit more explicit in the for-export version. It's one of those black and white movies that switches to colour for the gory finale; in this case, the death of the Ripper under a lift.

Lulu [No Orchids for Lulu]
Austria 1962
d **Rolf Thiele**
Nadja Tiller, Hildegarde Neff, O.E. Hasse
A plodding obscurity, with teutonic sex kitten Nadja Tiller as Lulu. Charles Regnier plays the Ripper.

Sherlock Holmes und das Halsband des Todes [Sherlock Holmes and the Deadly Necklace]
Germany 1962
d **Terence Fisher, Frank Witerstein**
Christopher Lee, Thorley Walter, Senta Berger
During this decidedly odd German Holmes movie – set like many Sixties Edgar Wallace adaptations in a fantasy London which mixes Victorian fogs and New Elizabethan trendiness, as if the Clean Air Acts had never been passed – it is mentioned that Jack the Ripper is at work again. There's also an unusual finale in which Professor Moriarty gets to defeat Christopher Lee's glum Sherlock and go free while the detective swears vengeance. The reason for both those peculiarities is that the film was to be shot back-to-back with a sequel in which Holmes would have bested the Ripper *and* Moriarty. It is possible that footage was shot for the prospective movie but never assembled into a final cut. One of the problems of all the Sherlock Holmes meets Jack the Ripper stories is that, surely, if the Great Detective had been on the case he'd have made sure the culprit was brought to book. If Billy Wilder's *Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* had been released in its original form, it would have explained why the Ripper got away with his crimes. In the finale, Dr Watson (Colin Blakely) tries to cheer up the depressed Holmes (Robert Stephens) who has just learned of the death of his treacherous true love – by interesting him in the Whitechapel murders. Holmes declines to get involved, and expresses his confidence in Inspector Lestrade's ability to bring in his man. Lestrade, as all Sherlockians know, was by far the least competent detective in London, so the killer went free. This, along with much other material, was unfortunately cut from the film against Wilder's wishes.

Das Ungehauer von London City [The Monster of London City]
Germany 1964
d **Edwin Zbonek**
Marianne Koch, Hansjorg Felmy, Dietmar, Schonherr
Based on a story by Edgar Wallace's son, the film has a series of Ripper murders coinciding with the theatrical run of a play about the original killings at the Edgar Allan Poe Theatre in Whitechapel. The leading actor (Felmy) is suspected, but someone else turns out to be guilty. More fog and mini-skirts.

Primitive London
UK 1965
d **Arnold Louis Miller**
Ray Martine, McDonald Hobley, Billy J. Kramer
A British *Mondo Cane*-style documentary which explores the wild side of the city, as represented by strippers, mods 'n' rockers, beatniks, battery chickens, musclemen, wife-swapping and recreations of the Ripper murders.

A Study in Terror
UK 1965
d **James Hill**
John Neville, Donald Houston, John Fraser, Anthony Quayle, Robert Morley
Holmes and Watson are brought into the Ripper case by a surgical kit sent anonymously to their Baker Street lodgings, with one large post-mortem scalpel missing. Although James Hill's direction is fairly uninspired, the film boasts an ingenious screenplay (by Donald and Derek Ford) and a superb cast. Besides John Neville and Donald Huston as Holmes and Watson and Robert Morley having fun as Mycroft, Sherlock's smarter brother, we are presented with John Fraser and Anthony Quayle as suspects, Frank Finlay as Lestrade, Adrienne Corri as a scarfaced woman of mystery, Cecil Parker as the Prime Minister, Georgia Brown singing in a pub and Judi Dench, Kay Walsh, Barbara Windsor and Edwina Ronay as victims. The screenplay was novelised by Paul W. Fairman under the Ellery Queen byline; the book, which has been republished as *Sherlock Holmes Versus Jack the Ripper* or *Ellery Queen Versus Jack the Ripper*, one-ups the film by having the fictional detective Queen unearth Dr Watson's account of the case and deduce that the character found guilty in the film was innocent and that Holmes let him take the blame rather than spread even more scandal.

At the root of her problems: Eric Porter's mix of drugs and hypnosis release Angharad Rees from *The Hands of the Ripper* (1971 Hammer Films)

La Morte ha fatto l'uovo [A Curious Way to Love] Italy/France 1967
d **Giulio Questi**
Gina Lollobrigida, Jean-Louise Trintignant
Hen-pecked chicken breeder Trintignant acts out his Ripper fantasies at the local brothel. His wife's niece and her lover kill the wife and frame him, but take the rap for *his* murder when he falls into a chicken feeding machine and is mangled. Sounds great, doesn't it?

Dr Jekyll and Sister Hyde
UK 1971
d **Roy Ward Baker**
Ralph Bates, Martine Beswick, Gerald Sim, Lewis Fiander
In order to have the lifetime he will need to discover a cure for all known diseases, Dr Henry Jekyll (Bates) experiments with a serum derived from female hormones which will make him live longer. Whether it has the desired effect is open to question, for it makes him turn into Mrs Hyde (Beswick), a predatory sex kitten, and take to the streets as the Ripper in search of more female glands. Brian Clemens's convoluted screenplay stirs in Burke and Hare as well as the Whitechapel Murders, complicating his already daring approach to the Stevenson classic. The director seems not to have picked up on the joke, but the twinned performances of Bates and Beswick are marvellous. This was one of a wave of slightly potty movies Hammer Films produced in the early Seventies to cash in on the looser attitudes to sex and violence on the part of the BBFC.

Hands of the Ripper
UK 1971
d **Peter Sasdy**
Eric Porter, Angharad Rees, Jane Merrow, Dora Bryan
In 1903, proto-psychoanalyst John Pritchard (Porter) takes Anna, the daughter of the Ripper, and tries to fathom the psychological triggers which cause the placid kindly girl to do things like driving pokers through a corrupt medium and pinning her to the door, cutting a chirpy maid's throat with a borken mirror or shoving a fistful of hatpins into a prostitute's eye. Despite some detailed characterisations, this film suffers from a repetitive storyline and a failure to make any convincing psychic or psychological links between the pox-ridden gentleman killer and his daughter. Sasdy, however, stages an extraordinary finale, with Porter pulling a sword out of his gut and pursuing Anna to St Paul's Cathedral where he coaxes her into a transcendent suicide as a choir swells on the soundtrack. American television prints omit some gore shots and pad it all out with new footage of a narrator explaining everything.

Next Issue: The concluding part of our critically blood spattered filmography brings the Ripper right up to date through the Seventies and Eighties with Boris Karloff, Ray Milland, Patrick MacNee and Michael Caine.

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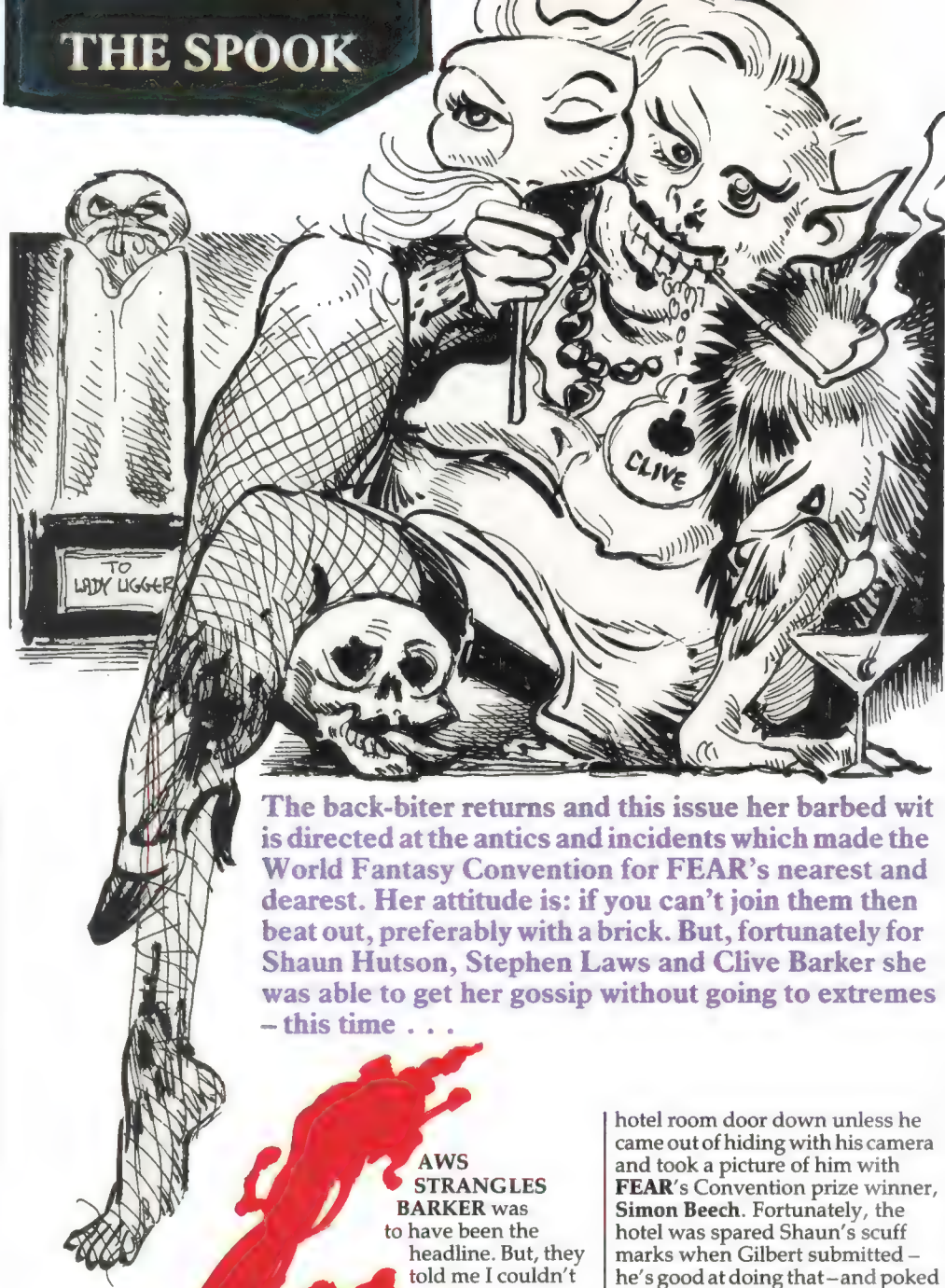

The back-biter returns and this issue her barbed wit is directed at the antics and incidents which made the World Fantasy Convention for FEAR's nearest and dearest. Her attitude is: if you can't join them then beat out, preferably with a brick. But, fortunately for Shaun Hutson, Stephen Laws and Clive Barker she was able to get her gossip without going to extremes – this time . . .

AWS STRANGLES BARKER was to have been the headline. But, they told me I couldn't have have one so this issue I've (a) decided to make my own and (b) take the opportunity to tell a few tales about the doings of our ignoble editor and his band of simpering acolytes at the World Fantasy Convention.

First, though, to the strangling incident which happened at the Midnight Horror Panel at said Convention. Steve and Clive were sitting not a hundred feet away from each other when something seemed to snap. Mr Laws was on his feet with tie twisting in hands like an overexcited worm. He launched himself at the surprised Mr Barker whose neck bravely tried to ward off the somewhat amorous advances of said tie.

Afterwards Mr Laws shrugged off the episode as something done in the heat of the moment. I should say, however, that it was one of the most exciting panel events.

The violence didn't end there. Oh no! Never one for false modesty, **Shaun Hutson** threatened to kick **John Gilbert**'s hotel room door down unless he came out of hiding with his camera and took a picture of him with **FEAR**'s Convention prize winner, **Simon Beech**. Fortunately, the hotel was spared Shaun's scuff marks when Gilbert submitted – he's good at doing that – and poked his box brownie through a narrow gap between door and frame.

Shaun's love affair with cameras extends beyond conventions. Weeks later, when the poster portrait advertising campaign for his new book *Victims* was in full swing on the London Underground, he was bundled by a bunch of press photographers. Ever one for the quick getaway, he was able to leg it from his hotel, wondering who had put them onto the scent.

AVALANCHE

Simon Beech's convention exploits didn't end with a flash either. Such a sensitive young man, but I could see that, intentional or not, **John Gilbert** and friends were about to destroy all of his illusions of propriety surrounding the **FEAR** team. For one thing he was given a devastating display of **Paddy McKillop**'s expertise at winning almost everything up for grabs at the Fabulous Fantasy Raffle, held on the Saturday evening.

Each prize, held aloft by the croaky-voiced **Stephen Jones** – to whom I must offer congrats on organising such a cracking convention – came with a ticket for a special preview of *Hellbound: Hellraiser II* on the Monday at the Scala Cinema in London. You guessed it. Our table ended up with 20 tickets which were snowed under an avalanche of books, posters and other promotional material. For us the raffle's outcome was no surprise, but for Simon the experience left him a changed man . . .

. . . though nothing could have prepared him for the Saturday night expedition to see *Hellraiser II* at the National Film Theatre. Everything went to plan until **John Gilbert** got locked in the toilets while trying to wriggle into his Hellbound T-Shirt – which, by the way, he ripped off the back of a poor innocent young lady for half the Forbidden Planet price. The lock eventually budged and a flustered editor, plus three people loony enough to travel with him, found his way to the NFT to see the movie – probably for the fiftieth time.

LONESOME TONIGHT

Surely nothing could go wrong at 1.30 on a Sunday morning in a deserted capital? Too right it could baby! Could the travelsome trio find a cab? No and to add insult to injury they walked across Waterloo Bridge down to Charing Cross, Trafalgar Square, Picadilly and Leicester Square where they found respite in an all-night burger bar.

They crawled up toward Soho in desperate search of a taxi – and nothing else I am assured – which they eventually found. Time of arrival back at the hotel: 3.45am. Simon staggered off to his room while Gilbert, as usual, was dragged off for an early morning session of coffee and biscuit (?) and a run down of what should go into his next issue.

And what were John Gilbert's room-mates doing while he swanned his nights away on low alcohol beer – I'm sure someone's been playing with this copy because he didn't come within an inch of anything low alcohol all weekend. I'll tell you, they were waiting for him to come home. He was part of a threesome in a twin-bedded room. He was supposed to sleep in one bed, **Jamie Conway** was in the other, while **FEAR** correspondent **Paddy McKillop** had the very comfortable chair.

I hear that Mr Gilbert didn't sleep once in his bed but Paddy McKillop took turns in the bath, on the floor and on the windowsill.

He was lucky. During the whole convention I slept in the wardrobe.

MAN MADE MONSTER

"Within a costume you know you cannot be seen, so you lose all your personal inhibitions"

If you came face to face with Arnold Schwarzenegger's foe in PREDATOR, you would be frightened. But actor Kevin Peter Hall did so – many times – and lived to tell the tale, for he was the Predator. He's also been Harry, the creature in BIGFOOT AND THE HENDERSONS. Here he tells David Cox and John Gilbert about fun and fear in and out of his suits

You try not to look surprised when you're introduced to Kevin Peter Hall. Tales of his height are greatly underestimated – he's seven-foot-two – but once the effect has worn off, and you're sitting down, you find his warm humour and affability match his size.

A man of both film and theatre, he's now created seven monster roles, including a dragon in the television movie *Mazes and Monsters* and a giant mutated bear in John Frankenheimer's *Prophecy*. His theatre work includes a revue and a play called *In 5 . . .*, both of which also starred his stage partner Jay Fenichel. And you can ask anyone he's worked with, Kevin's respected by his colleagues for his acting ability not his size. Nevertheless, it was with some trepidation that we asked the **FEAR** question 'What scares you Kevin . . . ?'

After playing *Predator* I'm not much afraid of anything. You kind of lose your fears. I guess I'm scared of earthquakes. That's from living in California. Natural disasters, they're pretty scary. Hurricane Gilbert, I was scared of and I wasn't even in the path.

[CBS/Fox US PR director interjects: 'Tell 'em about the gun . . . '].

It's funny; you ask for hairy moments. There were no hairy moments in 'Harry' [*Bigfoot and the Hendersons* was titled *Harry and the Hendersons* in the US], that all went very, very, well but *Predator* there was a gun, you know the gun is on the shoulder. In Mexico they had a Mexican special effects team which is different from any special effects team on the planet . . . The gun on the shoulder was loaded with nine charges. They had to load it for nine so they didn't have to take it off, put it together and load it again, and they also loaded them the night before which is a terrible mistake because charges shouldn't sit, especially overnight because they could go off bigger once they'd compacted with sitting.

We went to do the shot of shooting the gun, right after he comes out of the water and he's looking for Arnold and he's shooting things that he thinks are Arnold. Well, special effects went to press the button to shoot off charge number one of nine and all *nine* went at once and the gun blew up, and a huge, huge, explosion enveloped my entire body.

Everybody was in shock and everybody was waiting for me to drop. It was so big and it was so loud, and I was so angry. It could have blown my head off. The suit saved me and it was a blessing in disguise. It kept me from going deaf. That was the one thing everybody kept saying was 'Can you *hear*?'. So after that they packed them one at a time.

CREATURE COMFORTS

I'm not a danger freak. In *Harry and The Hendersons* there was nothing – apart from being hit by a car – that I didn't feel comfortable doing. Plus, the design of the suit was comfortable and it was soft and there was no hurting yourself. Harry was so much fun. To trash a house, I've always wanted to do that: go through the floor, go through the walls. I had a great time on that.

Predator was a little more difficult because I had metal blades on my arms, a gun on my shoulder, and a very cumbersome head. You had to be more careful, but I had total freedom.

It's very Zen and very, very, quiet when I'm not working because I'm conserving energy, particularly in *Predator* for those fight scenes because they were

exhausting. In *Harry* I could goof around all the time. Once I was in the Harry suit I could be Harry, I could play. But in *Predator*, you know, you have to stay focused, you have to keep your attention on the fact that you are in a dangerous place, you have to stay on balance and when it comes time to roll you want to do it right because you don't want to do it again.

You wanna do it in one, you have to be able to be seen, so you really become Zen about what you have to do. You concentrate and you work on your breathing. There are a lot of acting techniques; you just have to use them more because it has to come through. Everything's overplayed. It's bigger than life the characters you're going to be playing, you know? The predator is a bigger than life character. He is the embodiment of evil, scary, and can pull your guts out.

A predatory hug for **FEAR** editor John Gilbert

PREDATORY INSTINCTS

The predator was far more difficult to play. It took less time to do, whereas I spent almost a year on *Harry*. I spent four weeks actually shooting *Predator* but it was very, very, physically demanding and the suit was heavy. Staying on balance was very important too because the suit was so off balance with the huge gun on this shoulder and this *head*, this is heavy. It took four hours to get ready to play the predator and about a half-hour for Harry. Once I was in I was the predator for the rest of the day.

I knew what I was getting into when I took the jobs, that I was going to be behind the mask and that there was going to be, particularly with *Harry* to start with, a quite secretive attitude involved being behind the mask. Nobody would be telling who was behind the mask. It's actually part of the turf and everybody wants to know after after the movies have come out anyway, especially movies like this where it's not mechanical, you know there is a person.

Harry came out of the script and evolved through working with Rick Baker – the special effects, also responsible for *American Werewolf in London* and *Greystoke* – and the director Bill Deare, who was totally fanatical about the character. Every time I got into the suit he was, like, grooming it. It was like his big toy. It was his big dream to make a movie about Bigfoot so everyone on the project was very much behind it and very supportive.

BEAR HUGS

Rick Baker did drawings of what he wanted the character to be and he always wanted me to play it. So, the final design was sculpted over a lifecast of me. You're more free as an actor within a costume because you know that *you* cannot be seen, so you lose all your own personal inhibitions and you just get into the character. People react to you as the character anyway and that just helps feed you, to be able to hide yourself – *is he kidding?*

I get along, pretty much, the same with everybody. I'm a nice guy, people like me, whether I'm playing the predator or Harry in the Hendersons. A lot of big guys are meaner-looking and more imposing, but I'm the hugable type and I don't plan on changing that.

I like science fantasy a lot, ever since I was a child. It's great escapist entertainment: interesting characters, wonderful special effects, you know, not the same old thing.

I'd pick any new creature roles carefully because I'm known for such good ones that I couldn't take on a bad one now. I couldn't take on something that was less quality, or even work with effects people who weren't capable of keeping up with *Harry* and *Predator* because it wouldn't support my following.

One of my concerns with doing another creature is the fact that the following I have in magazines like **FEAR** and *Starlog* and *Cinefantastic* would go 'And then he was in this awful thing where he played this blob, and it was gooey, and how could you tell it was him? – it wasn't even tall'.

"The gun blew up, and a huge explosion enveloped my entire body"

WORD IS ON THE WINDS that CBS/Fox is preparing a *Predator* sequel. Kevin Peter Hall is ready to play the role again (a single explosive charge at a time), although he won't say whether he's been asked. **FEAR**, of course, will bring you the official news as soon as we get it.

NEXT ISSUE

FEAR

VISITS ELM STREET

- A MASSIVE full-colour souvenir guide featuring Freddy Krueger, past, present and future. We give the lowdown on his origins, and the films, the television show and the promise of *Nightmares IV* and *V*, plus an interview with Robert Englund about his plans for the role.
- TIM BURTON, director of *Beetlejuice* and the new *Batman* movie talks exclusively to Clive Barker about his almost overnight success, Pee Wee Herman, Michael Keaton and more.
- STEPHEN DONALDSON, author of The Thomas Covenant novels and *Mordant's Need*, tells tales of his life in India, of leprosy, mirrors and detective stories.
- GRAHAM MASTERTON, bestselling British author of *The Devils of D-Day*, *Charnel House*, *The Manitou*, *Feast* and *Ritual* on the success of his books and his surprising anonymity.
- TABOO comicbook creator STEPHEN BISSETTE works to reinstate the reputation of the horror comic, the likes of which have been banned since an upsurge of parental feeling in the Fifties.

ALSO

- DOUGLAS E. WINTER, American critic and close friend of horror luminaries like Stephen King, puts the horror anthology firmly in the limelight as the editor of the mega-selling *Prime Evil*.
- HEAVY METAL group IRON MAIDEN give Shaun Hutson the dosh on their fears.
- MICK GARRIS, American special effects master whose latest movie, *Critters II* hits screens this month, talks about his weird, but often wonderful, craft.
- JONATHAN CARROLL, award-winning author of *Sleeping in Flame* and *Bones of the Moon*, shows how humour and fantasy are not such strange bedmates.
- PLUS! Star-name fiction, the results of our censorship readers' poll, upfront, exclusive news and reviews on the latest books, videos and movies, incredible competition prizes, and all the wicked gossip from those Hogmanay parties.

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